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The Week

OWNERS of textile mills and some other people who share their general point of view have lately expressed vast indignation that the Federal Emergency Relief Administration should offer aid to strikers. Dispatches in the daily press have suggested that this is not done in Great Britain, and that the American government ought to be ashamed of itself for interfering so outrageously in labor disputes. As a cold matter of fact, the F.E.R.A. does not aid strikers. It aids anybody and everybody, so far as it can, who is on the verge of starvation. To withhold assistance from strikers who are destitute would indeed be to interfere in industrial disputes on the side of the employers, seeking to starve the workers back into the mills. The statements about British practice are completely misleading. Great Britain has unemployment insurance, which is paid for definite, limited periods to those who are unemployed, not including strikers. It also, however, gives relief through local bodies to anyone who is destitute. In other words,

British practice is the same as American—the only policy possible in any civilized state.

THE code authority for the textile industry refused to interfere in the present strike, on the ground that it was a strike against the government. The code authority also, as it happens, is practically identical with the employers' organization in the industry. If its action means anything at all, it is that the employers regard themselves as identical with the government. We suspected this was true, but we hardly supposed that they would admit it.

PUTTING an end to many months of confusion and obfuscation, the National Labor Relations Board decided last week that "the only interpretation of Section 7a which can give effect to its purpose" is "that the representatives of the majority should constitute the exclusive agency for collective bargaining with the employer." This decision unquestionably raises the exegesis of Section 7a to a new and more promising plane, for it recognizes that the essence of real collective bargaining is that an employer and his employees reach an agreement on hours, wages and other working conditions. To be meaningful, of course, such an agreement should be with the majority. But ever since last March, when President Roosevelt promulgated the principle of "proportional representation," employers have refused to recognize majority groups as bargaining agents. They have insisted, instead, that representatives of all their employees should participate in negotiations.

THE effect of this policy is admirably illustrated in the case of the Houde Engineering Corporation, whose dispute is the basis of the Labor Board's decision. Since early spring a majority of the company's employees have been members of the United Automobile Workers' Federal Union. The company, however, has insisted on proportional representation—on negotiating with both the federal union and its own company union. This policy, the Labor Board declares, "clearly prevented any arrival at collective agreements." Instead, it produced "rivalry, suspicion and friction" and was "calculated to confuse the employees." Thus the main intent of the Board's present ruling is to prevent

employers from dividing their workers into opposing groups under the pretense of giving them fuller expression. At the same time, however, the decision reserves to minority groups the right to present grievances and act collectively; it does not make mandatory the closed shop. In brief, it provides a workable formula for genuine collective bargaining—if employers can be made to accept it.

GERMANY'S "approach" in the matter of debt payments is nothing if not original. On August 27, Herr Schacht announced, in connection with Leipzig's autumn fair, that his country would make herself independent of those nations which refuse to take into account her economic necessities. Four days later he took advantage of the opening of the International Agricultural Conference in Bad Eilsen to state that the Reich was at the end of its tether so far as paying foreign debts of any kind was concerned. Furthermore, the president of the Reichsbank declared, the present "indeterminate moratorium" would have to be followed by a general and generous reduction of Germany's indebtedness to a sum that "Germany at some future time could hope to pay." The Kölnische Zeitung tried to soften the harshness of Schacht's pronouncements by charitable interpretation. "A last warning," it commented, "to Germany's creditors to abandon their negative attitude in the face of Germany's difficult financial and economic position before it shall be too late." The Reich would be willing, it intimated, to abandon its insistence on economic self-sufficiency if the Powers were willing to advance credits and call off (or prevent) the boycott of German goods.

BUT Germany's financiers are not so lenient in their judgment on Schacht's methods and they openly question the wisdom of his outspoken declarations. Cancellation of Germany's debts and the opening up of new markets for her output, they evidently reflect, might have sufficed before the trade balance had reached the vanishing point. At that time her creditors might have agreed to a proposal to take more of her goods, might even have extended further credits, since her reputation for financial soundness was still relatively unimpaired. Today that confidence is completely gone and the suggestion of Germany's financial dictator that an international agreement be substituted for an understanding with individual creditor states will find a cool reception. His efforts to interest an Anglo-American syndicate in the extension of credits has little chance of realization. As The London Sunday Chronicle points out, the Chancellor of the Exchequer would not permit the granting of further loans to Germany. And unless we are much mistaken, Washington would prove just as uncompromising.

THE 1934 Futurity Prize ought to go to the American and British governments for their present

negotiations about the navy and the merchant marine. Great Britain would like capital ships reduced from a maximum tonnage of 35,000 to 25,000. She would like guns cut down from sixteen to twelve-inch caliber. The British also suggest a world agreement limiting the merchant marine, on the sensible ground that there are far more ships than present business warrants. The United States is willing to consider cutting down guns from sixteen inches to fourteen, and reducing battleships to a maximum of perhaps 32,000 tons. It has not yet indicated any policy on limitation of merchant marine, though President Roosevelt's sentimental attachment to the sea, and his repudiation of Secretary Wallace's sensible suggestion for using foreign bottoms and increasing our exports, make the outlook a gloomy one. The real point is that these plans are discussed only a few months before the 1935 naval conference. At that conference, practically all informed persons believe that present agreements for naval limitation will be repudiated and the world restored to a desperate, unrestrained naval-building race. Certainly, this is what the Japanese want; and it is equally certain that British policy has lately swung so sharply toward support of Japan that the air is filled with rumors of a restoration of the old alliance. Under such circumstances, to talk about fourteen-inch or sixteen-inch guns is just about as helpful as suggesting to a man dying with cancer that he get his face lifted.

PHILADELPHIA is attacked, the industrial heart of the nation is exposed to the foreign invader, refugees stream over the shell-torn roads of Jersey—all in the army's current paper war. But it is an interesting variant from other years, this paper capture of the capes of the Delaware by the fleets and transports of the "Black Coalition." The War Department is careful to explain its strategic premises: the United States is involved in war against "a" power on the Pacific, whither the entire fleet has been sent; suddenly, at an inopportune moment, the European "Black Coalition" declares war and begins an attack upon our homes and factories, strategically our factories, psychologically for the benefit of newspaper readers, our homes. We do not know what tactical conclusions the War and Navy Departments will draw from these exercises—except the need for a double-sized navy and a standing army of a million, for these games have less variety than slap jack; the defense always loses. But we ourselves will draw a tactical conclusion for the benefit of both departments: don't get involved in a war on the Pacific; or to express matters within the cynical framework of *realpolitik*: don't get involved on the Pacific unless all possible components of the "Black Coalition" are involved in wars of their own in Europe.

THE strategic forethought of the War and Navy Departments for the past two years is interesting to follow. After the entire fleet was flaunted in the

face of Japan for many months it was ordered into the Atlantic, perhaps to show how rapidly the canal transit could be made, though it took thirty-seven hours instead of the expected twenty-four. Then the fleet came to New York for domestic political purposes—except that some of the best units were left at Panama, just to prevent some sort of Mukden incident, the Department seemed to imply, and with the especially important exception that a Rear Admiral with a submarine flotilla and some mine sweepers and layers were dispatched to the smoky, inconspicuous little fishing village of Dutch Harbor in the heel of the Aleutians. A little later in the summer some sea planes went to join the Admiral and the Navy Department announced that it would build a base of sorts at Dutch Harbor. Just what kind of base, how well fortified for what sort of ships or planes, it did not say. All these items about the Aleutians received scant notice in the American press. On the contrary, they made headlines in Japan. Now the War Department has us theoretically involved on the Pacific. It is no secret that the Department expects a Russo-Japanese war; is this current war game an indication that it expects us to intervene? Whatever it is, the Department had best revise its estimates for defending Philadelphia. We cannot fight a naval war in the Aleutians, support a land war in Siberia and defend the Atlantic seaboard all at the same time.

THE Reverend Edmund A. Walsh, Regent of the School of Foreign Service of the (Catholic) Georgetown University, in a recent speech said that he has documentary evidence that "Moscow" ordered attacks on the N.R.A. In the same speech, however, he himself uttered some pungent criticism of the Blue Eagle, and so did two other eminent Catholics, the Reverends Joseph Thorning and Wilfrid Parsons. Does Father Walsh suggest that he and his colleagues are all in the pay of the Third International? Probably not. Surely every intelligent person knows that the Communists are opposed to all efforts to patch up capitalism, in all countries and at all times. Any Communist, in Moscow or anywhere else, who came out in favor of President Roosevelt's efforts would at once be expelled from the party and probably tested for insanity. Father Walsh could put his intelligence and his influence with Catholic laymen to better use than by portentous announcements of the obvious, dressed up to sound new and significant.

WISCONSIN, which has pioneered in so many things, is at present working out an interesting experiment in the field of radio. The happy citizens of the Badger state are not handed over, as are most other people in the United States, to the untender mercies of laxative advertisers when they turn on their radio sets. Wisconsin owns and operates two radio broadcasting stations, which are run exclusively for the benefit of the listener—a situation that must seem millennial to most people out-

side the boundaries of the state. With an unusually interesting political campaign in progress this year, it was decided that (following a precedent established in 1932) facilities should be arranged by which "all recognized political parties" should be given an ample and equitable amount of time on the air. Accordingly, each of "the four parties which qualified to be included on the ballot"—Socialist, Progressive, Democratic and Republican—was given five hours' time on the air during the four weeks before the primary. By an ingenious method of rotation (and after drawing lots for precedence) each party is heard every day, but no party is on the air at the same hour two days in succession. There is no censorship of expression; the speakers, chosen by the state central committees of their respective parties, are merely reminded of the laws against slander and libel, and then go ahead. This, to be sure, does not solve all the problems of political broadcasting. There are other parties, which doubtless feel they should also be given time on the air, and no one can tell how many people listen to the broadcasts, or how they are affected. It is obvious, however, that the Wisconsin plan represents an infinitely better use of the radio for political purposes than exists in most other states where (despite the terms of the federal law) cold cash in the party coffers is still the dominant factor in deciding to what extent any party shall be allowed the use of this medium for reaching the people.

IT IS not easy to understand just why Poland should regard the defensive alliance concerning all foreign questions by the three Baltic States of Latvia, Estonia and Lithuania as a threat to her own security and influence in world affairs. Yet the tenor of Poland's comments, as published here, admits of no other interpretation. The one question in which Poland is presumably interested—her right to the city of Vilna which she took from Lithuania after the War in defiance of the terms of the peace treaties—was expressly exempted from the jurisdiction of the Baltic pact. As it stands, the Baltic agreement merely provides that the Foreign Ministers of the three states shall meet in semiannual conference to arrive at an understanding in foreign questions of mutual interest. Foreign diplomatic representatives of the three states are to work toward the same end. The real reason for Poland's displeasure lies elsewhere. Great Britain and France stood godfather to the pact, and Warsaw is alarmed. To Polish statesmen, this means that an Eastern Locarno Pact including the Little Entente is an accomplished fact. They see in these agreements the conclusion of an organized effort on the part of France and Russia to isolate Germany and Poland from the rest of the continent and they protest against it with words almost identical with those used by the Third Reich. The semi-official Polish press has become so unpromisingly anti-French of late, notwithstanding that nation's recent loan to the Polish government,

that there can be little doubt as to Warsaw's position should a serious conflict arise. For better or for worse, Poland seems to have cast her lot with the Third Reich.

AS USUAL California, Pennsylvania and Illinois retain their malodorous distinction as the areas in which civil liberties are most consistently violated. Industrial regions in the South and the New Jersey factory towns also share dishonorable mention in "Liberty Under the New Deal," the annual report of the American Civil Liberties Union. According to this detailed record, the status of civil rights is now somewhat improved, except when freedom is most essential and repression most likely to occur—during industrial conflicts. In too many instances, confusion over Section 7a of the N.I.R.A. appears to have obscured the simple clarity of the Bill of Rights. The A.C.L.U. report was completed June 1, too early to include comment on the San Francisco general strike. The pamphlet praises the Department of Labor for better treatment of aliens and others arrested on such charges as "suspicion of criminal syndicalism." Undoubtedly these rather optimistic conclusions would be modified now. Already the Union has found it necessary to protest, along with allied groups, against Secretary Perkins' telegram to Governor Merriam, the effect of which, it is said, "was to encourage anti-union employers and local officials everywhere to continue the drive on labor organizations." In short, the Union is beginning to find that another liberal New Deal promise may be just that and no more. The government perhaps does not condone Red scares and attacks by marauding Vigilantes, but it has not acted decisively to prevent them. General Johnson's firecracker phrases are hardly enough to ensure "law and order," which in some communities assume peculiar characteristics.

IN THE Deep South, as everyone knows, Negroes are rarely allowed to vote, and certainly not in the Democratic primaries, which are usually the real elections. Plain extra-legal coercion is the device used: any Negro rash enough to consider appearing at a polling place knows he would be sure to get into serious trouble, and almost always he refrains. In the border states, however, the solution is not quite so simple. When the Texas state legislature passed a law whose effect was to bar Negroes from party primaries, the United States Supreme Court rebuked the legislators. The Democratic Party in Texas has now declared that it is a private club, in which Negroes are ineligible for membership. This view has been sustained in the local courts, although attorneys argued that the Democratic primary is in fact the election, and that the action of the party constituted disfranchisement. Now the matter will again have to go to the United States Supreme Court. In view of past precedents, it is reasonable to hope for a decision favorable to the Negroes; but in view of past history, it still seems likely that

very few, if any, members of that race will be permitted in the visible future to vote in Texas no matter what the Court says.

NOTHING less than an approaching understanding between Hitler's and Mussolini's varieties of fascism, after what seemed an irreparable breach a few weeks ago, can explain what is happening in Austria at the present time. Last Sunday Chancellor Schuschnigg declared that the government would put its continued existence to the test of a plebiscite—sooner or later. The Christian Social Fascists of Austria cannot be so deluded as to believe that they will muster a majority vote at the ballot box. An understanding with the Social Democracy might give the government the necessary backing, but it could be arrived at only on the basis of far-reaching concessions as to political and trade-union activity. To grant these would bury Austria's last pretense to authoritative government and would completely alienate Mussolini, who has thus far been the Schuschnigg government's sole support.

EVEN without the disclosures of Vice-Chancellor Winkler, now substantiated by Göring's *Essener Nationalzeitung*, Mussolini's suzerainty over Austria and Dollfuss and his role of "rich uncle" to Starhemberg's Heimwehr were an open secret. What the world did not know was that Dollfuss had tried to come to terms with the German Nazis and that Mussolini, when he learned of the arrangement at the eleventh hour, had vetoed a final conference to be held in January. A second attempt was averted sometime later by the Italian Under-Secretary, Suvich, who arrived in Austria at the critical moment. Mussolini, so we now learn, would have had no objections to such an arrangement had the German Chancellor given binding and written guarantees that the German government would make no further effort to enforce its Anschluss aims. The good and naïve Austrian citizens who had looked to Dollfuss—as the Germans did to von Hindenburg—to save them from the menace of Hitlerism must feel foolish at this unexpected turn of affairs. The story of these mutual evasions, as told by Göring's organ, is highly diverting reading. Hitler carefully concealed from the Duce his negotiations with Dollfuss, while the latter kept the "Führer" equally in ignorance of his arrangement with Dollfuss to march into Austria in the event of a National Socialist coup. Added zest is lent to the story by the disclosure, in this quasi-official Nazi newspaper, that Mussolini openly favors the deposition of Dr. Miklas and the appointment of Starhemberg, his favorite son, as Austrian regent, a step fully in accord with the terms of the Dollfuss constitution. For Germany, these revelations seem to prove that unity is as far from being a reality as before. The Foreign Office, dominated by Baron von Neurath and represented in Austria by von Papen, continues to be the chief weakness in the Nazi scheme of things.

Upton Sinclair's Chances

UPTON SINCLAIR'S overwhelming victory in the race for the Democratic gubernatorial nomination in California has frightened the nation's conservatives nearly out of their wits, to judge by the press comment. They are now consoling themselves by statements that he can't possibly be elected in November. Conservative Democrats in California are being urged by such doubtless sincere well wishers as the black Republican New York Herald Tribune to join an anti-Sinclair coalition and vote for that recently obscure gentleman, Acting Governor Merriam. We do not know whether Sinclair will be elected, but it is obvious that he has a good chance. Registration figures indicate that there are more Democrats than Republicans in California, and it seems clear that most of these Democrats favor the Sinclair candidacy, since his vote in the primary was larger than that of all his opponents combined. While it is true that he will lose some conservative Democrats, he will also gain (as he says in his letter on page 132 of this issue) some progressive Republicans. Indeed, the G.O.P. in California is far from being the collection of mossbacked reactionaries that it is in most of the Eastern states. Republicans in that state have supported the enactment of a remarkable program of social legislation; they have several times sent Hiram Johnson to the United States Senate under the impression that he was an outstanding progressive. It seems fairly clear that the conservatives who now say Sinclair can't possibly win are whistling to keep up their courage.

If he is elected, how much of his program can he put through? Probably not very much. The powers of a Governor are sharply curtailed by the state constitution, and there is no evidence that he would have control of the legislature even for reform within these limits. In the course of time, he might get some laws altered by state referenda, but this prospect holds out only a remote and slender hope. The chief feature of his program is a promise to take over idle land and idle factories, operate them with the unemployed and distribute the products among the needy. No one has yet shown, however, that idle factories or idle land exist in California to any important degree. That state has few factories of any kind (less than one-third as many as New York) and it is fair to suppose that most of these are still operating, although of course much below capacity. Two-thirds of the land is idle, it is true; but it consists of mountain and desert, and it would be folly to waste money trying to reclaim any of this soil. What Sinclair proposes for California factories is, as a matter of fact, already being done to some extent on a nationwide scale by the Federal Emergency Relief Administration. Mr. Hopkins, however, has the great advantage of not being known as a former Socialist, and of continuing his work with a minimum of publicity.

The real significance of the Sinclair victory is its demonstration of profound discontent in California. A few weeks ago we were being told that the state was ultra-conservative—so much so that 99 percent of its inhabitants were supposedly organized in Vigilante bands for the purpose of beating up the radical one percent. It is now clear that this report was wildly exaggerated. The Sinclair victory confirms advices from reliable quarters which we had already been receiving, that the violence against radicals during and after the San Francisco strike produced a reaction favorable to labor; that even in the face of an almost unanimous conspiracy of silence by the California press, news of what was going on had reached the bulk of the citizens, and that they were far from approving of it.

If Sinclair wins in November, as we hope he does, his incumbency as Governor should prove tremendously interesting as a social experiment. In our opinion, it will show the impossibility of "one-man reform" in a single state, without any sort of intelligent and cohesive body of supporters behind him. It will show that you cannot "end poverty in California" without far more fundamental and searching reorganization of society than the majority of Californians are prepared to support. It will show how the necessity for political compromise waters down the doctrine even of a sincere, lifelong Socialist like Sinclair. It will serve as an object lesson by which the rest of America, if it only will, can profit greatly.

The Mendicant Railroads

PPRIVATE railroad managements are taking the aggressive once more. Arguing that the New Deal has not improved, but rather has worsened their position, they are seeking at once to levy on the public by higher rates and to forestall a gain for the workers by attacking in the courts the constitutionality of the pension law passed by the last Congress.

Superficially, their position is a reasonable one. N.R.A. codes, particularly those for coal, steel and steel products, have, by increasing the prices for these materials, raised their costs of fuel, rails and equipment. Increased costs might have been borne had there been a sufficient growth of traffic; for a few months, indeed, the railroads did show an improvement. But the net effect of the New Deal in industry has been to increase industrial profits, with little or no permanent growth in volume of output. And, in agriculture, output has been consciously limited, besides being curtailed by the drought. With industry producing less, and agriculture producing less, there is, of course, less to transport. So the railroads follow the example set them and, instead of encouraging more activity by lower rates, seek to compensate for their falling off in business by charging higher prices. They are trying to complete the circle of high prices and diminished

quantities of goods by passing the burden on.

So the several members of the capitalist body go on cutting one another's throats. Doubtless an increase in railroad rates, should it be granted by the Interstate Commerce Commission, would still further diminish traffic and leave the railroad companies in a worse position than before. Certainly it would increase costs throughout industry and trade, and tend to injure the general well-being.

The railroads, considered in their relationship to the economic complex as a whole, have a peculiarly poor case for higher rates. If we should arrange the various classes of prices according to the extent to which they have fallen during the depression, we should find at one extreme the agricultural products and raw materials, which have fallen most, and at the other extreme, railway rates, which have hardly fallen at all. The fact that the prices of steel and other capital goods which the railroads use have also fallen relatively little does not really give them a better case; if major price disparities are to be remedied so that exchange of goods can revive, this whole group of relatively high prices must be lowered, or at the least held where it is until other prices rise. Transportation charges form one of the most important elements of cost, and railway rates are an outstanding example of what the economists like to call "sticky prices."

According to classical theory, an industry like the railroads, faced with a shrinking market for its services and suffering from competition on the part of other kinds of transportation, would hasten to reduce its prices until the demand for its product grew sufficiently to keep it busy. Such action does not, however, take place naturally, because railroads are a legal monopoly and their rates are regulated. And those who decide what the rates shall be do not take this action because they are not at all confident that lower railroad rates alone would materially increase traffic. Railroad traffic depends on the activity of industry, which could not be greatly enlarged merely as a result of lower rates. It would take a general revival to affect the situation much, and this could scarcely be managed without a revision of prices all along the line. In addition, a reduction of railroad rates without a sizable growth of traffic would throw many roads into receivership, since so large a part of their capital is represented by bonded indebtedness. No generally lower price level could be achieved without writing off much of the railroads' debt—the last thing those who have power in the system will permit.

One might think that in these circumstances the railroads would exert powerful pressure for lower prices of the things they buy, that they would help to initiate a general movement toward reduction of the cost of capital goods, thus stimulating a revival. Even this, however, is beyond their vision. When, several months ago, Mr. Eastman was working to obtain lower prices for rails, and asked the roads to state what orders they would place if lower prices could be obtained, the Pennsylvania replied that it

was not interested, and the New York Central said that it had all the rails it needed. These roads are dependent for much of their traffic on the good will of the steel companies. The same bankers are influential in both the railroads and the heavy industries. Purchase of railway supplies at too high a price, in return for shipment of goods by the supply makers, is an old abuse in railway management. As long as the great industries want to maintain existing prices, you will not find the great railroads complaining bitterly. They are part of the same interlacement of private interest.

The opposition of the railroads to the new pension law is also a curious indication of the will to suicide on their part. Many of the roads now have pension systems, but with lower benefits and higher retirement ages. Because of the additional immediate cost, and also because, under the new law, the pension would be a right rather than a favor granted by a beneficent employer, the railroads are resisting the act. But the new law is in reality a device to help them save money in the long run, without causing hardship to labor and injuring the prospect of revival by reduction of labor's purchasing power. Railroad Coördinator Eastman is supposed to help the roads coöperate to make operating economies. Few such economies can be realized, however, without employing fewer men to do a given amount of work. And the law which created his office rightly forbade any changes which would reduce the volume of railroad employment at a time when the major problem before the country was to put more men in jobs. If traffic were growing, the economies could be made without decreasing the number of railroad men at work. But so long as it is not, the greater efficiency may be achieved gradually, and the surplus of labor may be absorbed, if more men can be pensioned at an earlier age. Such operating economies would, in the long run, greatly outweigh the cost of the larger pension roll.

But the railroads, in this instance as in almost every other, look only at the short run. They will not seek lower costs at the expense of capital, but only of labor, and, failing to find them, insist on charging the public more.

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Russia Enters the League

THE EVENT, as all the world expects, of the coming Assembly of the League of Nations will be the entry of the Soviet Union. Though we have foreseen it for nearly a year, it is none the less a surprising event. The League, moribund by its failures and the desertion of two Great Powers, suddenly enlists a new recruit whom it could not attract while the hopes and illusions of its partisans were still fresh. In the early days of the League the Russians told President Wilson that they could take no interest in it, because it was impotent to remove the root causes of war, which in their view are economic. Nothing has happened to lessen the cogency of that opinion. A League whose membership is corroded by fascism and given up to the pursuit of national or imperial self-sufficiency is even less likely to deal with the economic causes of war than it was in its more liberal phase. One recalls the furious polemics of Communists against the Labor and Social Democratic parties, who were convicted of "social-patriotism" because they supported the League. There are no signs, however, that Moscow cherishes any illusions about Geneva, as the right-wing labor movement did. Its approach is realistic: it believes that in the perilous years before it, Geneva may have its uses in staving off the war it dreads. To cherish even this belief may seem to argue a robust optimism. Why should the League, which left China to its fate, rush to the support of a Communist outcast? But in this quarter the Russians cherish no illusions. They know that if Japan attacks, they must defend themselves single-handed. What alarms them is the possibility of a German move timed to second the Japanese onslaught. It is in that event that they think the League might be useful.

Here they may reckon shrewdly. Critics of the League who doubted its efficacy in every other major test have usually conceded that it might at need act against Germany. It is founded on the Versailles Treaty; it has always been dominated by the victors of 1918.

The fact is, however, that it is rather the insistence of the French than the spontaneous enthusiasm of the Russians that explains their approach to Geneva. They want the effects without the name of a Franco-Russian alliance against Germany. They are, however, still sufficiently aloof from the capitalist world and the pre-war type of alliance to dislike any frank adoption of that expedient. The device of a treaty of mutual insurance against aggression suited their purpose, while it fitted the French conception of a modern technique to a nicety. But the French are nothing if not loyal to the League. It guarantees their conquests; it stereotypes the map their General Staff drew; it upholds

the Versailles Treaty; with an ingenuous air of liberalism, it is the ideal safeguard of stated Powers against unwanted change. Therefore, the French stipulated that the Russians should join the League, bringing their pact with them.

Adolf Hitler, the clumsiest of men in dealing with trained minds, as he is the shrewdest in managing a mob, was the first architect of this Franco-Russian *rapprochement*. To his savage persecution of the German Communists Moscow might have turned a blind eye, but it could not ignore Hugenberg's disclosure at the London Economic Conference of the Nazi ambition to colonize the Baltic States and the Soviet Ukraine. At a blow the work that Rathenau began at Rapallo was undone. The two pariah Powers, Europe's untouchables, had helped each other steadily in the arts of war and peace through thirteen years; they were now irreconcilable enemies. In Paris the alerter minds of the liberal Left saw their chance, and M. Pierre Cot, the Air Minister of the Daladier Cabinet, flew with his technical staff to Moscow.

After this voyage of exploration Paris conceived a new respect for the Red Army's Air Force. Its pilots are thought to be both daring and skillful, its machines of Soviet manufacture excellent, though their motors are said to be too heavy. But the really astonishing discovery, which soon went the round of French journalists and politicians, was that the Russian capacity to manufacture airplanes is, or soon will be, second to none. In this first element of modern military power the Soviet Union surpasses both France and Great Britain singly, and should soon surpass them combined, which means that it will stand level in manufacturing capacity with Germany. Its plant, moreover, is located well beyond the range of any possible attack, while every factory in Western Europe is vulnerable. Here then was an acceptable ally. This Power had all the moral qualifications for membership of the League of Peace. Russia's pariah days are over: she can bomb with the best.

Russia then, one may take it, will fly on powerful wings to the dovecot of peace this September. Some minor accident may be foreseen, as she alights. It is unlikely that Poland will allow her to take her seat as a permanent member of the Council without claiming the same precedence for herself. That honor the French and their satellites might not accord with a good grace to the Poles, unless in the meanwhile they have returned without equivocation to their duty as allies. In Warsaw lies the key to the future of the ambitious Franco-Russian system of insurance against aggression.

The idea can be stated in two very different ways.

Its original meaning, and probably its only effective meaning, is that it is a method of encircling Germany. Russia, the minor Baltic States, Czechoslovakia and (it was hoped) Poland should join in watching Germany, ready to defend one another against her, if she should transgress a very tightly drafted pact of non-aggression. France would "guarantee" the treaty (whatever that may mean) and Russia in the same way would "guarantee" the pact of Locarno. Decency and the spirit of Geneva required, however, that an invitation to join should be extended to Germany also, on equal terms. In this final form, reached after some fumbling and delay, the plan won the approval, but not the participation, of the British government. If Germany, and still more, if Poland also, stand aloof, the plan reverts to its original inspiration—a defensive scheme directed frankly against a Power whose barely sane tyrant is a menace to Europe in general and to Russia in particular.

The diplomacy of London and Paris reckoned, though not confidently, on Hitler's acceptance; at least it thought that a refusal on his part would be stupid. To accept is not so easy as London and Paris affect to think. It means, first, a loss of initiative, an unwilling entry into the Franco-Russian system. It would morally compel Germany to return to the League, which she quitted in dramatic anger. That she cannot do without gaining equality in arms, and for this France under M. Barthou is not prepared. Apart from these reasons the pact is open to the deadly objection that vitiates the whole League system: it stamps as "aggression" any effort to alter the status quo by arms, without opening the door to any effective procedure to bring about change by peaceful means. Aggression in post-war Europe can have no ethical meaning. It is, in the concrete, an effort to upset the balance of power and the distribution of territory and resources reached by force in the last months of 1918. The pact, in short, is a roundabout way of renewing the Treaty of Versailles. In this no German can sincerely share.

Poland's case is rather different. She too dislikes the thought of following a Franco-Russian initiative. She is not anxious to efface herself within the French system. On the contrary, she has been emancipating herself from it. She has just made her own ten-year pact with Germany; why then make another? Colonel Beck, who directs her foreign policy, has his own personal reasons for acute resentment against official France. Behind him is the business world of Warsaw, which complains that Paris is niggardly in satisfying its appetite for capital.¹ It had started building a railway from the Silesian coal field to the port of Gdynia, with the promise that the French would finance it; with the onset of the slump, French support abruptly ceased.

Precisely how close the recent understanding of

¹ Since this article was written, a large French loan to Poland has been announced.—THE EDITOR.

Berlin and Warsaw may be, few claim to know. It may not go beyond the harmless published text. But it may imply some measure of concerted action, in which case Poland will be in no hurry to adhere to the pact while Germany stands aside. The more romantic commentators (the Russians among them) suspect that under it may lurk some secret design to further, with German backing, an adventure in the Ukraine, if and when the propitious moment arrives. One need not assume that Hitler and Pilsudski intend at the start to join in open war on Russia when Japan gives the signal. What they might conceivably do would be to aid a White Ukrainian insurrection, while the Red Army is occupied in Siberia. Hitler has raised a Ukrainian legion, much as he raised an Austrian legion, and he might use it recklessly as a spearhead for conquest, if there was no one to forbid the adventure. Mussolini protected Austria with his armed veto, but would anyone perform the same service for the Soviet Union, if it were heavily engaged in the Far East?

Against this background of adventure and suspicion the Franco-Russian pact gains a clear and concrete significance. It is much more than those platonic pacts to keep the peace for several years which Mr. MacDonald had the habit of proposing whenever he sat at table with several European statesmen. It is drafted with minute precision. It forbids, not merely formal acts of war, but precisely those covert acts of indirect warfare in which the Nazis specialize. It would stamp as aggression German, or German and Polish, support for a White Ukrainian rising. It may be this precision, and not merely its larger implications, that render the pact unpopular in Warsaw as well as in Berlin.

The event will show how far these romantic but hardly improbable suspicions are justified. They are in line with much that Hitler has done, and with everything that his lieutenant, Alfred Rosenberg, has written. They fit what we know or suspect of the long-range policy of the Ruhr industrialists, from the start the paymasters of the Nazi party. The decision lies with Warsaw. The French may bring themselves to pay enough to buy the signature of Poland to the Russian pact. That, as I write, is problematical.

The issue that turns on Russia's entry into the League is, then, one of "real politics" in the strict Bismarckian sense of that term. Russia enters in the hope that the League, which means for practical purposes the French group, will localize in the Far East the war that she expects Japan to levy against her. That limited reckoning, and not any conversion to Wilsonian liberalism, draws her to Geneva. Her calculation is probably sound, but only if the French are prepared to sink more capital in doubtfully remunerative Polish enterprises. The roots of war, as Lenin told Mr. Wilson, are economic.

London.

H. N. BRAILSFORD.

Minnesota Sets Some Precedents

THE Minneapolis truck drivers' strike last July brought a unique use of the National Guard, contrasting sharply with San Francisco and Toledo. It also provided a severe test for the Minnesota Farmer-Labor movement.

When a Farmer-Labor Governor is dealing with a labor union, he is dealing with one of the members of his own political organization. When labor-union business agents go to that Governor, they are talking to the man they helped to nominate and elect. The Farmer-Labor movement is organized as is no other political party in power in any state. The Farmer-Labor Association, the functional organization of the party, is made up of thousands of dues-paying members who attend meetings of their local Farmer-Labor clubs the year round, campaign years and others alike. In addition to these local clubs, there are affiliated labor unions, coöperatives and farm organizations, which send their delegates to county central committees of the association.

The union leading the strike was the General Drivers, Helpers, Petroleum and Inside Workers, Local 574, an A.F. of L. affiliate. This union has been branching out, working toward an industrial rather than a craft basis of organization. Its chief fight with the employers was over the organization of inside workers. And it must be remembered that, despite the union's affiliation with the Farmer-Labor Association, the principal strategists of Local 574 were Trotskyites and, far from wishing to work with the Governor, had every desire to see him on the spot.

The third party to the dispute was the employers' organization, the Citizens' Alliance. The large banks are in the Alliance, and they can and do refuse credit to business men who weaken the unity of the employing class by giving concessions to labor. Many a local-union business agent has been told to go to the bank to discuss wages and working conditions; the owner himself is not free to bargain. And as for the newspapers, of course—well, their advertisers are members of the Alliance, and some newspapers, too, owe notes to the banks. The Alliance also keeps spies in all unions, and tries to disrupt labor activities.

The first move of the employers, when the strike was threatened, was to buy full-page newspaper ads and start a Red scare. The first move of Local 574 was to call upon all Twin City labor organizations for a united parade and mass meeting. Labor responded. More than 15,000 marchers paraded with union banners and overflowed the Minneapolis auditorium, which holds 13,000. Speaker after speaker enthusiastically endorsed 574's fight, and pledged support. This mobilization helped crystallize sentiment and played a big part in later events.

Like the May strike, this one started off with fine organization. There was the same efficient picketing system, the same discipline, the same foresight for all problems. One important addition to the strike machinery was the excellent little one-page daily—The Organizer, with a circulation of 12,000 copies, selling for anything from good-will up to \$3. The city learned to search The Organizer for answers to the capitalist papers, and the little daily mobilized public opinion for the union.

On the day the strike was declared the Governor asked the State Department of Agriculture to help in establishing and running a temporary produce market, which had been arranged by agreement between the union and farm organizations, to enable farmers to continue selling although the commission markets were closed. This official assistance was of genuine help to the coöperative market, which remained open throughout the strike.

Picketing proved effective, and truck traffic was stopped. Newspaper efforts to force Olson to call out the militia and use it to aid the police produced only one battalion, which stayed in the armory. And so the police department made a gesture toward opening traffic. A five-ton truck was loaded with a few small cartons. One hundred and fifty police, armed with shotguns, rifles and pistols, were detailed with much publicity to escort this load. The pickets, massed around the warehouse, waited. The decoy truck pulled away from the loading point, and as it did so a truckload of pickets swung alongside. Police opened fire immediately, shooting first at those in the truck, and then at men standing nearby. Within five minutes, they shot more than fifty. The fact that forty-two of them were shot in the back corroborates the testimony of reporters and other witnesses given to investigators sent by the Governor, that the police shot, not at attackers, but at men who were trying to get away or help the wounded. The pickets were not armed, even with sticks. Shortly afterwards the militia arrived and took charge.

The police, during the following days, continued to convoy a few trucks with twenty or more squad cars to a truck. Since only a small amount could be moved in this way, the union could afford to ignore it, and did. But each day the number of trucks moved grew larger, the convoys smaller. Before long the movements promised to reach dimensions that the union could not ignore, and the situation grew tense. It seemed that another slaughter was approaching.

A peace settlement, known as the Haas-Dunnigan plan, was presented by federal mediators. It was a pretty fair fifty-fifty compromise. It

granted representation of inside workers in the market district only, provided for reinstatement of all strikers without discrimination, and left the question of union recognition to be settled by an election.

Olson issued an ultimatum: peace or martial law. And he added that martial law would not mean putting troops at the disposal of the local police authorities. The union voted to accept the Haas-Dunnigan plan. The employers' advisory committee turned it down. Martial law was declared.

The rank and file of the strikers were jubilant at first. "We can turn our backs on a cop now," they said. The leaders were less optimistic. Within a few days the spirit of the rank and file had changed. Now they said, "Everybody and his brother is getting a permit." Picketing was forbidden, and many trucks ran with military permits. Nightly mass meetings were held, at which speakers charged Olson with breaking the strike. Attendance at these grew larger and larger. The strikers demanded, in view of the fact that some employers were chiseling—that is, running without permits—that Olson stop all truck traffic for a period and begin again after an investigation and a clean-up of the permit system.

Olson was having to bear in mind the threat of injunction proceedings in Federal Court. An injunction would have put him in a serious position. He had to be ready to justify everything he did. Necessities must move, and the definition of a necessity is not easy. In addition, he was opposed by members of his military staff, which included business men and judges. Union men, dissatisfied because all permits were not revoked, announced that they would picket, and that if troops tried to stop them, there would be a battle.

On the morning set, August 1 at 4 A. M., the National Guard peacefully occupied strike headquarters and arrested the union leaders. The headquarters were freed that night, and the leaders released next day. This move averted the struggle.

During the same day the offices of the Central Labor Union were raided. This was apparently an accident, resulting from a report telephoned to the military that "arms" were hidden at a certain address. The officer who received the report and ordered the raid was not a Minneapolis man, and did not know that that was the address of the Central Labor Union. The offices were freed in an hour, with an apology from the Guard.

But during this day and the days that followed a thunder of protest came from the Farmer-Labor movement. During the earlier days of martial rule the Farmer-Laborites were apparently satisfied; they felt that the Governor was doing all he could, and was handling his difficulties with fairness. A day or two before the raids some Minneapolis Farmer-Labor organizations had become critical because of the apparent abuse of the permit system and the complaints of the union. In spite

of the Governor's popularity, and the very real confidence that most of the workers had in him, they did not hesitate to send delegations to protest and ask for explanations. After the raids all previous protests looked mild.

Apparently the Red scare had had little or no effect on the Farmer-Laborites. Whether or not some of the leaders of 574 were revolutionists, it was plain that this was no revolution; it was simply a strike by workingmen for wages and the right to organize, and the Red talk was beside the point.

All the ordinary channels of expression and opinion were controlled and monopolized by the employers, but the Farmer-Labor movement offered a channel through which the sentiments and views of rank-and-file workers could be pointedly expressed. There is little doubt that this served to strengthen the Governor's hand in holding out against the everlasting pressure of the employers and newspapers.

Supporters of the Governor claim that the union leaders forced the issue prematurely. During the days before the raid he had been negotiating with companies, especially in the market group, and nineteen of the twenty-two firms in that group had expressed themselves as willing to sign the Haas-Dunnigan plan separately. Later, pressure from the Citizens' Alliance forced them to retract. It is certain that the union leaders were not adverse to forcing the Governor's hand and that they were not political friends of Olson. But it is hard to see that they had much choice on August 1. Their men were demoralized by inaction, disheartened by what they felt was a large-scale movement of trucks under the permit system; the strike was going to pieces.

A few days later Olson restricted the permit system. Only the firms signing the Haas-Dunnigan plan were allowed to have military permits. The result was that four thousand signatures were obtained—mostly from very small concerns. Some others signed the agreement, and then came back to remove their signatures. The Alliance was putting on the pressure again, and none of the 166 major trucking companies composing the employers' advisory committee signed.

The same day that the new restrictions went into effect, the employers brought suit, in federal court, for an injunction to prevent Olson from continuing his use of the troops. Olson appeared in court himself, defended the legality of his measures as being solely in the interest of "law and order," and won. The decision of the judges, however, censured the Governor and stated that if they, the judges, had had troops at their disposal they would have granted the injunction.

The strike became a stalemate after the injunction trial. It was an endurance contest between the martial rule and the ability of the employers to stand the partial embargo. It was a contest between troops on the one hand, and the boycott and bank credit on the other, as enforcement weapons. For

more than a week this went on, and then suddenly the strike was settled.

The final peace plan, although reworded, was identical with the Haas-Dunnigan plan which the employers had declared their sturdy American principles would not let them sign, except for a difference of 2½ cents an hour in the wage scale.

Why did the employers crack? The most plausible rumor is that some of their members were losing too much money and were on the verge of giving in and signing the Haas-Dunnigan plan separately. Rather than have this public rift in their ranks the employers compromised as a unit.

The employers were anxious for a showdown in this strike, because they feared the militancy that the May strike had shown and they feared the leadership of 574. They used every effort to make this a decisive defeat, and the one shooting shows that they were willing to go to any lengths. When the

struggle turned to the political arena they used pressure of every sort and a vicious newspaper bombardment to force the Governor to use the militia against the strikers.

In the end they did not succeed, and it is probable that no small part of the reason for their failure is that there existed a mobilized and vocal political movement, with rank-and-file workers represented, which was able to exert effective and quick pressure and publicity on the other side.

While it must not be forgotten that the strike was not a complete victory and ended in a compromise, the final result is testimony to the possibilities of an organized working class. On the other hand, the Farmer-Labor movement had to use almost all of its resources and strength to hold out against the employers' bombardment in a situation that was merely a strike.

Minneapolis.

ANNE ROSS.

To the Finland Station: I

4. Michelet Tries to Live His History

MICHELET'S absorption in his history, his identification of himself with the activities he was writing about, carried him to singular lengths. His emotions and the events of his own life are always breaking through into his narrative; and, conversely, the events of history seem to be happening to him. Proust has parodied amusingly this aspect of Michelet: "This was always my force, my weakness, also," he makes Michelet write, "this need of life. At the culminating point of the reign of Louis XV, when absolutism seemed to have killed all freedom in France, for two long years—more than a century (1680-1789)—strange headaches made me think every day that I should have to interrupt my history. It was only with the Oath of the Tennis Court (June 20, 1789) that I really recovered my force." But the examples which have come to light in Michelet's letters are even more bizarre than Proust's parody: "I am accomplishing here the extremely tough task of reliving, reconstituting and suffering the Revolution. I have just gone through *September* and all the terrors of death; massacred at the Abbaye, I am on my way to the revolutionary tribunal, that is to say, to the guillotine"; and, "As for me, I have arrived at a thrice-solemn moment; I am about to enter the heart of the Convention, I stand at the gates of the Terror. At the same time, my wife is on the point of wresting forth a new *me* from her womb. . . . This moment of suspense, I assure you, is for me full of fear." We finally get to feel that Michelet is the human spirit itself fighting its way through the ages—enduring long degradations, triumphing in joyful rebirths, contending within

itself in devastating and baffled conflicts. We are not surprised when, arriving at last at the year 1798, we find Michelet's own birth recorded as an event to which all that has gone before from the Merovingians and Carolingians has in some sense been leading up. And the effect of this touch is not grotesque; Michelet makes it seem natural, of the essence of his subject. What he is really telling us is: "Under stress of this moment, it became possible for the human consciousness to look back on human history with new insight and to understand all that I have shown you."

But one cannot enter into human history once it has taken place; nor can a man of the nineteenth century really recover the mentality of the sixteenth. One cannot reproduce the whole of history and yet keep to the forms and proportions of art. One cannot care so much about what has happened in the past and not care what is happening in one's own time. One cannot care about what is happening in one's own time without wanting to do something about it.

Michelet was pulled in many directions. In the first place, his subject was so vast that it was always tending to burst out of the bounds which he had been forced by the limits of life and of human capacity to prescribe for it. The "History of France" proper overflowed into a whole series of little books which dealt more fully with special aspects of the subject. Michelet takes us through the ages, panting and talking at top speed: if he is sometimes elliptical and obscure, it is because he has so much to tell us. He explains in one of his

prefaces, as it were apologetically, that if his narrative hasn't the ideal symmetry of art it is because the facts of history won't permit it; and he remarks in one of his letters, in connection with a one-volume history of France: "You would have difficulty imagining how hard it is to reduce that long string of centuries to the unity of a work of art." At the same time, his scientific passion kept him feverishly grubbing among the archives and involved him in researches which have compelled the respect of those academic historians who would have been glad, for his opinions and his brilliance, to discredit him. He was the first to write a history of the Revolution based on the actual records of the various revolutionary bodies; and as the Hôtel de Ville was soon afterwards burned, he was to remain the only historian who had made use of the records of the Commune. Gabriel Monod, his biographer and disciple, complains that he did not give his references in a genuinely scholarly fashion; but even the methodical Taine and the envious Sainte-Beuve were forced to confess that though Michelet's way was as alien as possible from their ways, his work remained valid none the less.

Then, furthermore, Michelet, reëntering the past, successful though he is at making us see it as it seemed to the people of the past, has nevertheless inescapably the wisdom of after-the-event and cannot restrain himself from trying to intervene. He is always warning, advising, scolding his actors, whom, however, he cannot hope to influence. And in the meantime, contemporary events were constantly soliciting his attention. He wrote pamphlets against the Jesuits, in vindication of the revolutionary tradition, in defence of France after 1870; according to the devoted but disquieted Monod, he turned his lectures into public speeches. He insisted that what he wanted was to get out of history "a principle of action," to produce "something more than intelligences—souls and wills." He was never, he complained, at one with himself; all his life, he was hurrying and straining to accomplish prodigious tasks which seemed to loom insurmountable before him. "Having strayed from the paths of harmony forever," he writes in one of his letters, "I have resumed the life I led so long: that of a cannon ball." Yet his history found its vein and its proportions; and he stuck to it. Even in 1848, when his excitement over public affairs was at its height and his friend and ally Quinet was running for political office, Michelet declined to take part in politics. His early years had conditioned him, as the behaviorists say, for self-dependence, literature, research—as his hair had turned white at twenty-five. He had made a second marriage late in life with a woman much younger than himself, who gave him sympathy and admiration; but the impression we get from his work is that of a man who has subsided into original habits of solitude. He worked at night and made the centuries of the dead keep him company so that he might accomplish some work of use to the living.

5. Michelet Between Nationalism and Socialism

WHAT HAD he to tell them in his lectures and pamphlets? What were Michelet's conclusions from the crises which seemed continually, during his lifetime, to be reviving the revolutionary issues and in which the Revolution seemed continually defeated? In what direction did he believe that human progress had manifested and was to manifest itself?

Not long before 1848, and just before beginning his "History of the Revolution," Michelet wrote a little book called "The People." The first half of the book, "Of Slavery and Hate," contains an analysis of modern industrial society which in its essentials still holds good nearly a century later. Michelet, taking up the classes one by one, shows how all are tied into the social-economic web—each, exploiting or being exploited, and usually both extortionist and victim, generating by the very activities which are necessary to win its survival irreconcilable antagonisms with its neighbors, yet unable by climbing higher in the scale to escape the general degradation. The peasant, eternally in debt to the professional moneylender or the lawyer and in continual fear of being dispossessed, envies the industrial worker. The factory worker, virtually imprisoned and broken in will by submission to his machines, demoralizing himself still further by dissipation during the few moments of freedom he is allowed, envies the worker at a trade. But the apprentice to a trade belongs to his master, is servant as well as workman, and he is troubled by bourgeois aspirations. Among the bourgeoisie, on the other hand, the manufacturer, borrowing from the capitalist and always in danger of being wrecked on the shoal of overproduction, drives his employees as if the devil were driving him. He gets to hate them as the only uncertain element which impairs the perfect functioning of the mechanism; the workers take it out in hating the foreman. The merchant, under pressure of his customers, who are eager to get something for nothing, brings pressure on the manufacturer to supply him with shoddy goods; he leads perhaps the most miserable existence of all, compelled to be servile to his customers, hated by and hating his competitors, making nothing, organizing nothing. The civil servant, underpaid and struggling to keep up his respectability, always being shifted from place to place, has not merely to be polite like the tradesman, but to make sure that his political and religious views do not displease the administration. And, finally, the bourgeoisie of the leisure class have tied up their interests with the capitalists, the least public-spirited members of the nation; and they live in continual terror of communism. They have now wholly lost touch with the people. They have shut themselves up in their class; and inside their doors, locked so

tightly, there is nothing now but emptiness and chill.

What then? The second half of "The People" seems as ridiculous to us today as the first half seems acute. Michelet, like many nineteenth-century writers, is at his worst when he is preaching a gospel. We know them well in English, these nineteenth-century gospels: Ruskin's *Beauty*, Meredith's *Nature*, Matthew Arnold's *Culture*—large and abstract capitalized words, appearing in cloudy apocalypses, as remedies for practical evils. Once Michelet leaves history proper, once he gets outside his complex of events, he shows the liberal nineteenth century at its worst. Great displays of colored fire are set off which daze the eye with crude lurid colors and hide everything they are supposed to illuminate. The bourgeois has lost touch with the people, Michelet tells us; he has betrayed his revolutionary tradition. All the classes hate one another. What is to be done about it, then? We must have love. We must become as little children; for truth, we must go to the simpleton, even to the patient animal. And Education!—the rich and the poor must go to school together: the poor must forget their envy; the rich must forget their pride. And there they must be taught Faith in the Fatherland. "Here," Michelet is forced to confess, "a serious objection arises: 'How shall I be able to give faith when I have so little of it myself?'" "Look into yourself," he answers, "consider your children—there you will find France!"

With all this, he says some very searching things, of which he does not perceive the full implications. "Man has come to form his soul according to his material situation. What an amazing thing! Now there is a poor man's soul, a rich man's soul, a tradesman's soul. . . . Man seems to be only an accessory to his position." And his conception of the people, which at moments seems mystical, comes down at the end to something which makes it synonymous with humanity: "The people, in its highest conception, is difficult to find in the people. When I observe it here or there, it is not the people itself, but some class, some partial form of the people, ephemeral and deformed. In its authentic form, at its highest power, it is seen only in the man of genius; in him the great soul resides."

Socialism he rejects: property has been too far subdivided in France, and the French have too strong a sense of property. And he is appalled by a nightmare of the national resources administered by French public officials. No: the bourgeoisie and the people must learn to know and love one another.

The Revolution of '48 followed. The Paris proletariat, led by Socialists and demanding the municipal workshops they had been promised, were shot down by the bourgeoisie. "Let the day be stricken out," he wrote in his journal; and "I should never write 'The People' now," he said.

Yet he was to remain a man of his age, a man of a generation which had seen many political sys-

tems fail, which had been exposed to the rhetorical idealism of romanticism and which, finally, had been pulled in all directions by a confusion of social forces. "Young and old, we are tired," he had written already in "The People." "Why should we not confess it, almost at the end of that laborious day which now makes half a century? . . . Even with those who, like me, have passed through several classes and who through all sorts of trials have preserved the fecund instinct of the people, that has not saved them from losing on the way, in the conflicts they have waged within themselves, a considerable part of their forces." Michelet continued to elaborate a typical nineteenth-century moral gospel in a series of social studies which he alternated with the volumes of his history. "Love" and "Woman," evidently inspired by his late second marriage after a series of unhappy or uncomfortable liaisons, were an attempt to hold the French family together by recalling the casual French to the sacredness of domestic relations; and Michelet was naïvely delighted when some mischievous person assured him that his book was driving the brothels out of business. "Our Sons" returned to education, the last hope of the liberal in all periods; and "The Bible of Humanity" was an effort—of a kind all too familiar in our own time—to provide a new substitute religion by combining all the best features of the old ones.

It was the positive pole of Michelet's nature keeping him steady against the pull of the negative, toward which his history in its later phases was gravitating; and we cannot grudge him a little well meant nonsense in compensation for those terrible volumes written under the oppression of the Second Empire and dealing with the last days of the old regime. Here Michelet's chief literary vice, a kind of romantic verbiage, has entirely faded away; the influence of Tacitus, from his earliest reading one of Michelet's great admirations, seems to assert itself. Here he anatomizes politics and intrigue in a style which grows more and more incisive and terse and with a caustic coldness like Stendhal's; and, by an incomparable power of tragic horror, he weights this chronicle with the burden, ever more heavily dragging, of the lives of political prisoners and inconvenient nuns stifled in blind prisons and *in pace's*, the slaughter and eviction of whole Protestant communities by Louis XIV's *dragonnades*, the long tortures under the whips of the galleys of those whom thought or conscience had brought there—filling up the abysses of history with those millions of human beings who had been dropped into them and forgotten, until we ourselves are almost ready to shut the book and read no more about the past of humanity. Even Michelet's interest in natural history—inspired, also, by his new wife: it was one of her enthusiasms—which stimulated him during the same period to publish a number of books, "The Insect," "The Bird," etc., celebrating lyrically the marvels of nature, has another side in

his history, where the doings of human beings begin to seem to have more and more in common with the doings of insects and birds. It was the moment of "The Origin of Species," and naturalism was already in the air.

The events of 1870-71 had a shattering effect on Michelet. He had been away from Paris at the time of the invasion; and at the news of the first French defeats, he returned in the belief that he was needed, that he could somehow be of use. During the siege of Paris, the house in which he was living was burned; Michelet's apartment miraculously escaped, though the chair in which he worked got scorched. Then his windows were smashed by a powder magazine blowing up in the Luxembourg. Michelet was then in his seventies, and he retreated before the siege.

Before the declaration of war, he had signed, with Marx and Engels and others, an international pacifist manifesto; and he now brought out a pamphlet called "France before Europe," in which as "a worker to the workers of the world," he summoned them to create "an armed peace league." But his confusion between the cause of France and the cause of the workers of the world is very evident here. "The great labor party, the laboring, the industrious, the productive nations" are to arm against "the party of death," which is simply "Prusso-Russian militarism." He praises the moderation with which the revolution has thus far been carried on; only one man, he notes, has been killed. The Socialists have shown admirable restraint; and Socialism is largely a local matter: there are still only ten million industrial workers to twenty-six million peasants, and the peasants, who have made the Second Empire possible, are still strong on the side of property. All the classes are coöperating fraternally; France need not fear "the social question."

Not long afterwards, in his exile at Pisa, the news of the Paris Commune reached Michelet following the news of the surrender of Paris; and he had an apoplectic stroke. It was the third workers' revolt during his lifetime; and this time a Communist government was to hold Paris for two and a half months. The bourgeois government at Versailles shot its prisoners; the Commune slaughtered bourgeois hostages, including the Archbishop of Paris. The bourgeois bombarded the city; and the Commune burned public buildings. The population of Paris fought the Versailles troops for eight days and were finally defeated by the massacre of from twenty to thirty thousand men and women. When the reports of this civil war reached Michelet, he had a second and more serious stroke, which paralyzed his right arm and his organs of speech.

Yet he recovered to continue his task. He had brought his notes with him, and he returned with furious industry to his history, taking it up where he had dropped it, at the fall of Robespierre. The final volumes of Michelet are not merely somber, but bitter. Though his organic conception of his-

tory enabled him to see humanity as a whole, he was in the habit of thinking of it and dealing with it in terms of its components: nations. He had, however, a special version of nationalism which enabled him, in the case of France, to identify the "*patrie*" exclusively with the revolutionary tradition. In the name of the Revolution she had been chosen to lead and enlighten the world. But the old nationalism, the growing inspiration of common interest and purpose, of which Michelet had been following the development—the nationalism of which Jeanne d'Arc had been the prophet and the Federations of 1789 the explicit realization—was now turning into something which had nothing to do with the principles of '89: it was turning into modern imperialism. Napoleon, a foreigner among the French and a traitor to the Revolution—and how much more, Napoleon III—is for Michelet the mockery of the national ideal. Michelet's history, in its latest volumes, is bursting out of its ideology. "I was born," he writes in one of his prefaces, "in the midst of the great territorial revolution and I shall have lived to see the dawning of the great industrial revolution. Born under the terror of Babeuf, I have lived to see the terror of the International." The history of the nineteenth century may be summed up, he says, in three words: industrialism, militarism, socialism.

But he was too old to go far with that story: he breaks off with the banishment of Napoleon to St. Helena. The last words of the last volume are like an epitaph: "But by a singular blunder," he writes, "they situated him on St. Helena—so that of this high and conspicuous stage the scoundrel could make a Caucasus, exploiting the pity of the public and preparing, by force of his lies, a bloody second repetition of all the disasters of the Empire." They were to be Michelet's epitaph, too: soon after writing them, his heart failed, and he died; the last volumes came out after his death. He had intended to continue his history further; but, characteristically, he had brought it to an end and died with it, at precisely the right moment, both of contemporary events and of history. A new point of view, as we shall see, was needed to deal with what followed. Who can imagine Michelet on the Third Republic?

But his work was complete in itself; and when we look back on it, we can see that the breaking off leaves it as an artistic whole admirably proportioned and accomplished. The early centuries of comparative barbarism succeed each other fast; they lead up to modern nationalism, Jeanne d'Arc; a brief lapse, then a great international movement of enlightenment and independence, the Renaissance, the Reformation, causes the story to overflow its frame (or, more accurately, Italy and Germany to overflow into the frame); then the Renaissance lapses, the pace slows up, the scale of presentation expands, we see the unification of France, the intensification of French nationalism, and, with it, the development of a new Renaissance,

which has its climax in the Revolution; the scale becomes enormous, we trace the motives in every heart, a day may now sometimes last longer than a century of the Middle Ages; then, the great drama done, the pace accelerates and the scope opens out again; the interest of the revolutionary drama and of the national epic are both finished. I am not here interpreting history even from Michelet's point of view, if we follow all his statements and indications: I am describing the impression which he actually, by his proportions and his emphasis, conveys. This was the story which he had to tell and which, through all the shifts of his contemporary world, the vicissitudes of his personal career, kept its consistency and reached its completion. We can study in it how far it is possible to reconcile the nationalistic ideal with a concern for the life of mankind.

The "History of France" stands unique, a great work of imagination and research of a kind perhaps never to occur again—the supreme effort in its time of a human being to enter into, to understand, to comprehend, the development of a modern nation. There is no book which makes us feel when we have finished it that we have lived through and known with such intimacy so many generations of men. And it makes us feel something more: that we ourselves are the last chapter of the story and that the next chapter is for us to create.

But what and how? Michelet cannot tell us. The fierce light of his intellect flickered out in a rhetoric smoky and acrid.

EDMUND WILSON.

The fourth instalment of the first section of Mr. Wilson's essay—a study of the decline of the revolutionary tradition focused in the work of Taine and Renan—will appear in an early issue.—
THE EDITORS.

Cleaning Up the Connecticut

NEW ENGLAND at last is going to do something about cleaning up the Connecticut River. For years the inhabitants of those communities lining its banks have become increasingly aware that the once beautiful stream is becoming constantly dirtier, more filled with unhealthful bacteria, and consequently less attractive. Recent tests of the content of this waterway from Canada to Long Island Sound have disclosed a condition that strikes at the economic foundations of the life of the valley.

There was a time when a manufacturer, seeking a site for his factory, picked New England because of the availability of labor, and because of its waterways in districts that had unlimited power and a ready outlet to railways or the sea. Today the labor may be obtained in the South for less money, electric power supersedes water and streams are so polluted that they are virtually ruined for indus-

tries requiring untainted water supply. In many of those streams, no living creature can survive; and in the Connecticut and most of the streams emptying into it swimming is out of the question. In Long Island Sound, a million-dollar oyster industry has been wiped out. The problem of rehabilitation has two aspects: first, cleaning up the stream with an eye to holding what manufacturers remain and luring those who hold aloof; and, second, eliminating those elements that endanger health and limit recreational facilities. A definite program has been established with its center in Hartford.

A few years ago, Connecticut awoke to the endangering of her most valuable resources by the pollution of her waterways—a pollution to which industries and municipalities contributed—and in 1931 created a water commission to control or eliminate pollution.

New England streams are polluted by both domestic sewage and industrial wastes. Connecticut is the center of the brass industry, which uses an acid that will kill every vestige of vegetable and animal life in any stream into which it flows. It is easy to tell a municipality how to treat its sewage, but the industrial waste presents a variety of problems. In many cases, methods of elimination have been developed; but in others, expense or lack of information makes the task appear almost insurmountable.

Paper mills can treat their waste economically, and much has been done already. But the little Naugatuck River, for example, is an evil-smelling, dirty, offensive overflow for uncountable gallons of waste from brass factories in a concentrated area that represents a large section of New England's economic backbone. The solution of that difficulty seems to be to confine brass factories as far as possible to the Naugatuck, which does not flow into the Connecticut.

The manufacturer of surgical gauze cannot use water stained by dye from a paper-box factory above. Manufacturing rayon in one factory had scarcely begun when unfortunates whose dwellings bordered the river below were driven from their homes by the stench of decaying vegetable and animal life; no living thing remained in what a week before had been an attractive stream. Solutions were found with comparative ease for both these problems.

Disposal of sewage is simpler than that of industrial waste, yet it requires a somewhat longer time to be put into effective operation. Any community with a public water supply is now obligated to provide proper disposition of sewage, and consequently must plan ahead to provide adequate sewage treatment as early as possible. The process is expensive, and in many instances the program has been divided into a series of steps to take from one to five years for completion. At the moment, every municipality in Connecticut not already equipped with a sewage-

disposal plant is occupied with some step in the program—retarded often by lack of funds.

Hartford has just started to lay intercepting sewers to lead to the first large sewage-disposal plant on the Connecticut, recommended after a survey made in 1927. Following this, other cities nearby are now engaged in some part of a similar undertaking. Hartford's unselfish attitude will benefit cities below. Hartford itself must be helped by those above. The only hope of ultimate success in the basic project is in creating a seemingly altruistic interest throughout the length of New England. That interest is rapidly being aroused, and up the river goes the therapeutic antitoxin, fighting infected water and stagnant public opinion.

Already every state in New England except Massachusetts and Rhode Island has a planning board for studying natural resources and planning for the future. These states have had an eye on the \$3,300,000,000 appropriated in June, 1933, by the federal government, with the intent of putting the unemployed to work immediately on worthwhile projects. No money could be obtained unless surveys and plans were in readiness. New Hampshire and Connecticut created planning boards in December; Vermont came along this spring and the others will follow soon.

Last March the Izaak Walton League of Springfield, Massachusetts, actuated by a desire to restore fishing, held a mass meeting and appointed a committee for that purpose. Early in April the National Planning Board and the planning boards of the New England states met at Concord, New Hampshire, with the cleansing of the Connecticut as the most important consideration.

The F.E.R.A. has made possible the employment of large numbers of men on state projects, to study sources of pollution in the Connecticut Valley. Farsighted communities that have completed surveys may now borrow 30 percent of the cost of labor and materials from the P.W.A. Unfortunately, at the moment there are few of them. Hartford obtained \$900,000 from the fund, which it is using on its sewage-disposal project. Many other communities, chagrined because they had been dilatory, are hastening to finish the necessary steps. Through the influence of Joseph Woodruff, planner and adviser to the New England Regional Planning Board, other New England states hope to obtain money to help clean up the rivers.

The basis of the Connecticut River project is economic, and recreation is secondary. Yet all the states are beginning to realize that both aspects are inextricably bound together, and that the beauty of the river depends in large measure on its being clean. Exponents of the scheme foresee a day—perhaps a half-century hence—when a broad river may flow between beautiful banks, fed by streams from which flows water pure enough for fish to exist, and lined with beaches from which human beings may bathe during some of that promised leisure.

MARIAN MURRAY.

Washington Notes

The Growing Problem of Relief—General Johnson Wins a Round—Shouse Gets the Bronx Cheer

MORE QUIET sweating is being done by responsible members of this administration over the relief situation than over any other problem now confronting the New Deal regime. It is not going too far, I think, to say that it is causing more brain strain and headaches than all the other problems put together. In the minds of those who best know the facts, to find the right solution is more vital than either the reorganization of the N.R.A., the readjustment of the A.A.A. to new conditions or the successful launching of the new federal housing program. With no desire to minimize the importance of any of these projects, I believe the most menacing situation that exists today is that of relief. In this I think I am in accord with practically every man in position to judge.

A plain statement of the facts is all that is needed to convince anyone. Instead of decreasing in the year, the relief load has steadily increased; in both numbers on the rolls and cost it is far higher than last September and will be higher still in another month. The conservative estimate now places the number who subsist through relief funds at sixteen million and there will be considerably more before the winter is over—no one at this stage can tell definitely how many more.

It seems quite clear that the present method of handling relief is wasteful, unscientific and bad. It cannot go on indefinitely. Mr. Roosevelt himself made that statement a good many months ago and it has, in effect, been repeated by the federal relief authorities since. The notion that private industry could or would absorb any considerable number of the unemployed millions now on the relief rolls has turned out to be unfounded. Despite some improvement in business and the jobs provided by the public-works program and the N.R.A. regulations, the number on relief grows all the time. It is not easy, in the face of this, to argue that the New Deal has been a success.

Although it is recognized that something drastic has to be done about this, it is precisely the problem that Mr. Roosevelt pushed away from him at the last session of Congress. He should have faced it months ago. He should have had his administration program for dealing with it ready long before the Congress adjourned. If he had, as I pointed out in this place at the time, he could have got it through and the seriousness of the existing situation would have been somewhat ameliorated. Now, he cannot do anything real until next year and then it may be—probably will be—considerably harder to get anything through. And even yet, so far as I can gather, he has not definitely settled what he wants to get through.

The situation is being "intensively studied" by Mr. Hopkins, the able young relief administrator, by Madam Secretary Perkins, by Senator Wagner and various others. The administration proposal, I am told, will embody some form of unemployment insurance, coupled with an old-age pension plan and certain other ideas copied from the English. There are also some ardent advocates of a greatly increased public-works appropriation. Administrator Hop-

kins is understood to feel that no European method—he looked them over this summer—is either adequate or applicable to the situation here; that an “American Plan” will have to be evolved. At the moment, the evolving has not progressed very far. True, the next session is still four months off and nothing can be done in the meantime except to continue the distribution of money and supplies under present methods. Fortunately, notwithstanding the drain of the drought, there appear to be sufficient funds in the hands of the President to handle the situation until the Congress can act.

This subject of relief, despite its importance, is kept more or less in the background here and at Hyde Park. Neither the President nor the F.E.R.A. officials want to do much talking about it until their plans have taken concrete form. It has been overshadowed, the past week, by various interesting and significant events.

One of these is the row over the N.R.A. It developed between Mr. Richberg and Secretary Perkins on the one side and General Johnson on the other, and according to most accounts seems to have been conducted in a rather unseemly manner before the President himself. Certainly, there was considerable heat on both sides. The net result of the fracas was a switch by Mr. Roosevelt from the Richberg-Perkins to the Johnson side, thus leaving the General, temporarily at least, on top of the heap, with his internal critics silenced for the moment. The executive order increasing his salary by \$9,000 can be construed only as a complete answer to all his enemies. It was, I think, rather a curious procedure upon the part of the President, and however victorious the General may seem now, the net effect of the whole business will be to make his ultimate elimination the more certain.

Naturally, the politicians among the New Dealers are concerned about the coming campaign—but, it is fair to say, not greatly concerned. Confidence seems pretty strong, and justifiably so, that the number of seats lost by the Democrats will not seriously reduce the present huge majority or shake Roosevelt's control. The most crazily sanguine Republican has no expectation of a Republican majority in the next House. On the contrary, politicians on both sides seem most keenly interested in the outcome of the four-cornered fight for Speaker to succeed the late Henry T. Rainey. The best information available at this time is that, while the administration would prefer Sam Rayburn of Texas, it will find it impossible to push aside Mr. Byrns of Tennessee (who as majority leader is next in line) without an open activity it cannot afford to exhibit.

The unctuous Mr. Farley has already declared that the White House has no candidate and there will be no “meddling.” Of course, this is not taken seriously by any save the wholly unsophisticated. The man chosen in the caucus will be the White House choice, but that choice will be made manifest with a maximum of delicacy and diplomacy. The President, personally, will keep in position to assert that there has been no interference on his part.

Aside from the speakership fight, the only other subject of political interest the past week has been the Shouse-Smith-Davis-du Pont-Miller-Wadsworth American Liberty League. For an organization hailed as filling a “long

felt want” it must be admitted the League got off to a rather bad start. It is spurned by conservative Republicans as well as by Democrats. The friends of Mr. Hoover resent its personnel equally with the friends of Mr. Roosevelt. It certainly seems logical that the reactionaries of both parties should have some organization without a partisan label through which they can articulate their hostility to New Deal policies. But, somehow or other, this League does not appear to fill the bill. Its well wishers in both parties seem agreed that Mr. Shouse is not the man to be at the head. The League should, they think, do better than that.

T. R. B.

Washington.

Other People's Money

Johnson and Section 7a—A Stomach Ache in the Affairs of State—Plenty of Credit But No Debtors

I SHOULD like to add a few words to the discussion, now so voluminous, of the efforts to unhorse General Johnson. They have to do with the hatching of that well known bird of prey—the Blue Eagle.

Always it must be remembered that Johnson was never interested in the labor sections of the N.R.A. He had a crazy notion that prosperity could be brought back by raising prices. The indispensable condition of this, he supposed, was to put the control of industry into the hands of trade associations with the right to limit production and fix prices. Newspapers insist on repeating that he helped to write Section 7a. He did nothing of the sort. That was written into the act before he appeared on the scene. He never felt any real interest in it. And when this is realized it will be easy to understand his flabbiness in acting against Ernest Weir, his conduct in Detroit and above all in San Francisco and, of course, his outrageous action against Donovan for which he has been so signally humiliated by the National Labor Relations Board. His one and only contribution to the N.R.A. was his insistence on the right to limit production and fix prices.

When the act was passed and, against the advice and wishes of several of the President's Cabinet members, he was made administrator, his first scheme was a proposal to organize, or at least to stimulate, active boycotts of firms that attempted price cutting. “Do you remember what happened during the War?” he fumed to various conferees. “Do you remember the coalless Mondays, for instance? The shop or store that violated that rule had merely to be named and the infuriated people took care of the offender. A brick or two through the window did the work. That's what'll happen here. We will have merely to point out the chiselers and the people will put some bricks through their windows.”

This talk shocked, even frightened, members of the Cabinet and a foot was put down squarely on this violent plan. Hearing of it now we can understand the General's talk in Berkeley when he told the workers to run the Reds out of their ranks like rats. But the General is not easily defeated. The boycott idea having been sidetracked,

he hatched out the Blue Eagle. Instead of labeling offenders—the people who refused to raise their prices or hold them up—he would confer a badge on the compliers. This would serve the same end. Members of the Cabinet committee named by the President to supervise the N.R.A. were opposed to this. Some of them were violently opposed to it. Johnson had already seen the President and got his approval. At a somewhat stormy session of the Cabinet committee the vote was against Johnson and his savage bird. He challenged the right of the assistant secretary holding the proxy of an absent cabinet member and thus held up the decision. It was settled that one or two of the Cabinet members would call on the President to lay before him the dangers of the plan and to ask a curb on Johnson's violence.

But fate was at work. The President had gone over the week-end for a yachting trip along the Potomac. He had eaten a large bowl of cherries. And these afflicted him with the collywobbles. For several days he was immured from all callers. The protesting Cabinet members could not get to him. Meantime Johnson won over another Cabinet member, thus giving him a sufficient vote to make a decision. He hurried the event and got the Blue Eagle approved before the President came out of his attack. I believe this story has not been printed before. But it is well known in Washington.

Now Johnson faces the boot. His sin has been the historic folly of trying to bring back prosperity by raising prices. The President and his new adviser, Mr. Donald Richberg, have changed their minds on this point apparently. They are about to let the General down. He will be the goat. But it ought to be remembered that in everything he did he had the full support of the President and the unwavering approval of Richberg, who, whenever the General's conduct was under fire, stepped forward to man the mud-guns. Now these two warriors propose to retreat and leave the unlucky General to take the rap.

But of course he should go. First, because his madness about price raising has brought the whole recovery effort to a desperate crisis. Next, because enforcement of collective bargaining with him as administrator will be impossible and can lead only to endless labor war. Third, because he is a violent man and his successful attempt to whip up the people of San Francisco to Red-hunting is a disgrace to the Roosevelt administration. Fourth, because he is now an obvious liability to the administration, and finally because, with the development of events, he stands out now clearly defined as the real representative of big business in the New Deal. All his talk about "cracking down" was so much wind.

For many months the President and Mr. Jesse Jones have been abusing the bankers for their refusal to make loans to business. The bankers insisted that they were willing to lend but that no one wished to borrow. I made some effort to check up on this and reported in this department many months ago that the failure of bank loans to rise in volume resulted from an almost complete lack of demand for credit. But Mr. Jones and Mr. Roosevelt, after threatening to make loans directly, if the banks refused, created a fund of \$580,000,000 for use in direct credits to business. Now after several months, Mr. Jones

is forced to admit that of the half-billion dollars only \$15,000,000 has been advanced by the government.

JOHN T. FLYNN.

Now Wotan Questions

Now Wotan questions, "Shall I come again?
And shall I ride again in the black wood?
My helm, my azure plume, shall they lift up
And shall I top the silver horse and ride?
Still silver and blue he stands, white and spotted
Like mildew in the moonlight. White and blue
Like a battle he rides. His silver turns to swords,
His blue to bullets. Silver slits the wind
And blue buries its holes into the night.

"He rides. Neither to left nor right he looks,
Nor up nor back. His head points with my sword.
So flip and fast he flies, his hooves are clean,
But when I scatter bodies in his way,
His silver feet wear red. A gorgeous beast
He is, all wet and white, with blue-burn spots,
And down below, for joy, red in the hooves.

"Shall I top my horse and ride the wood tonight?
The savage is astride again, the knife
Points. The bloodstream riots in death. The man
Falls. Horses' hooves are red again.
The Goth prowls. I am Wotan. Shall I go?
What keeps me here in question and no answer?
Why do I not spring to saddle and ride
Into the Resurrection and the Life?

"Kind eyes, brown eyes, lean eyes, sharp eyes, mad eyes,
Spy eyes are in the bushes, eyes and eyes.
The trees are full. Is it these I fear? Not I.
Who looks nor right nor left, nor up nor back,
He sees no eyes. He sees the enemy.

"The would-be savages, the newest riders
In the old black wood, these see the eyes.
These who drank blood, broke bones and muddied earth,
These stand like lambs and donkeys now, and where
They killed, they baa and bray their innocence.

"What clean, what blond, what cold-eyed savage halts
After the battle to hold up hag hands
To show how white they are? What wolf paints pale
His public cheek to look like brooding Christ?
What lion-heart, slunk for slaughter, stops the sword,
Lets down his lust, and yelps, as a great Eye
Pours out from out the branches?

"These are not
My men. I am Wotan! They see eyes.
Then let them call! In Gladsheim . . . in Asgard. . . .
Wotan is dead!"

HELEN WOLFERT.

Mrs. Wolfert's poem received honorable mention in the Reichstag fire-trial poetry contest.—THE EDITORS.

Disillusionments and Splendors

THERE have been in the past numerous military biographies in which some famous soldier's battles, gifts and strategic and tactical achievements are made a basic and expressive part of his history. On the other hand, with our drift toward biography as a form of engaging reading, there have been numberless volumes in which the portrait of a great general is drawn free of all such detail; he is as easy of access as a hero in fiction. No doubt there is something to this, since generals are human beings after all, some of them even with scandals, love affairs and chit-chat. But on the whole it might be argued that the supreme characteristic of a great general is supremely expressed only in battles, as a poet's is in poems. This sort of biography, non-military about a military man, tends even more than with most men either to heighten the virtue or to let the wind out of a hero.

Among the many modern military biographies I have read, one of the few that seemed to me professionally based, so to speak, is the biography of Jeb Stuart by Captain John W. Thomason, Jr. His book about General Stuart has the flair of an artist looking on, but also the security of military knowledge and imagination. It is more, then, because of the remarks of Captain Thomason recorded on the jacket of Mr. Swiggett's book¹ than from the book itself, that I accept the decision as to the famous Morgan's military gifts. The author of this present biography seems to think the "real"—that threadbare phrase among historians—Morgan had certain powers, mostly possibilities (see page 313). The rest of his judgment is as God finds it; for the book is full of facts, citations, quotations, incidents, disillusionments and splendors from every direction. Captain Thomason's comment is: "Morgan was one of those queer figures existing on the fringes of the West. There was a fine flame of leadership about him attractive both to soldiers and women, who are alike incurable sentimentalists. Reading 'The Rebel Raider' I am confirmed in my professional opinion that he lacked military aptitude. His personality took hold powerfully on both sections."

Diverse biographical items emerge from this volume: Morgan, the raider, the Kentucky aristocrat, the fine chivalrous figure, was such as to enlist wild loyalties and fierce animosities about him; by universal testimony he was in his early years open-handed to all, white and black; people never forgot him; fifty years after the war, a Kentucky lady wrote one of his officers that she remembered as yesterday the thrilling night Morgan came to her father's house and with what willingness her father provided both men and horses. . . . "I was a girl of sixteen . . . eating supper in the moonlight . . . how quietly you all rode away." Amidst enormous masses of fact, private opinion and allusion, the thread of Morgan's life appears in the course of these three hundred pages.

Mystery still surrounds many of the points in Morgan's story, and mystery and argument play a handsome part in the entertainments of "The Rebel Raider." We do not even know, for example, just what the truth was about his death. It was on a September morning at the Williams

home in Greeneville, Tennessee, where Morgan had slept that fatal night, his troops elsewhere. "Linen sheets," "pink fried ham," romantic adultery, a jealous woman's revenge, come into the story, and a Mrs. Lucy Williams, subsequently divorced by her husband under some of the good old thundering epithets, becomes the center of the plot. There were also several boys and men who seem to have been the betrayers. At any rate Morgan, refusing to surrender, was shot by a Northern troop, in the garden. He fell dead among the flowers drenched with night dew. The men dismounted and rushed into the garden to tear his clothes to pieces for souvenirs. He was left naked save for his drawers, with his face turned down in the mud. When Gillem's troop took Captain Withers, they said they had something to show him and this was what he saw. He protested the outrage, got the body carried to the house and washed and dressed; a coffin was found and a one-horse wagon to carry it away.

For those who may take it as not without bearing on the author's attitude and historical method, I will add that the volume closes with the scene in the Lexington graveyard, where in her own family's lot, not in the Morgans', is the stone of the neglected first wife, a chronic invalid after the birth one day and the death the next of her first child. To be more exact, the final sentence in this history of General Morgan, his relations to Kentucky, to the Confederacy, to the Copperheads in the North, his raids, his military position, reads: "Nestling close to it is a very small stone, that of her son who died in September, 1853."

One of the indicative spots in the book occurs in the Postscript (dated Christmas night, 1933), where Mr. Swiggett tells us that three men who were held up as villains in the books or family talk of his boyhood, became glamorous figures to him. They were John Hunt Morgan, the handsome Duc de Guise, and young Walter Butler. With this book on General Morgan, he is, he says, two-thirds through his exploration of them. On the whole, I would modestly suggest a somewhat different stress in these explorations. It is plainly a good thing to follow up and check the truth or falsehood in the histories and mythologies of noted human beings. But it is even more important to point out, *with something of creative epic outline*, just what the qualities were in them that make their failures and shortcomings matters of such importance.

STARK YOUNG.

Screen Versions

I DO NOT suppose we will ever get this matter of the relation between books and movies straightened out, for there are too many angles. The manner of production alone can make a bad film of a good novel, and a good film of a bad novel, and all the grades in between. Then there is the matter of whether the material was adapted to the screen in the first place. This nobody seems to know: if a book is on the best-seller lists, it is famous, it is enough. Being bought, it is either forgotten or put into production, and fun (if it was in no way a funny book) then commences. An established best-seller is of course too well known to allow a great deal of tampering, because there is always a large section of the public to keep a stern

¹ The Rebel Raider: A Life of John Hunt Morgan, by Howard Swiggett. Indianapolis: The Bobbs-Merrill Company. 341 pages, \$3.50.

eye on whether it was the same in the pitcher how he leaves the old man, etc. So instead of making it over for studio purposes, they keep to the story and scratch around trying to give it more punch by cutting out motivation and heightening conflict, which should be as between heroes and villains throughout.

Under these circumstances the cards are stacked against Hollywood and the result is awful to see, and people who do not quite guess what it is all about will see it and say Ha, giving a bitter laugh. Having missed half a dozen good ones they will rouse themselves and go see what Hollywood has done to "The Fountain," and it is just as they thought sure enough.

As a book "The Fountain" was a fine book, but had a great deal to do with certain inward processes that must slip out here. The pattern of two men in love with Ann Harding and she loving back through a mist of tears does not of course make any sense. Character strength and the unnatural stone quiet of Enkendaal are not caught by the camera, which otherwise finds little else to do with itself; and so there is nothing for it but to work up the pretty intrigues, patriotic differences and meaningless amours of people who live in a castle with a secret staircase and a harpsichord. Barring the presence in it of Brian Aherne, "The Fountain" is nothing more than a very apt vehicle for Miss Harding, being as it is long and solemn and wonderfully empty.

"The Barretts of Wimpole Street" is the same sort of thing, only much more of it. Sidney Franklin apparently directed straight from the stage version, which in terms of celluloid occupied exactly ten reels and three sets. And the result is that while there have no doubt been sillier plots than that showing Fredric March squirting around among father and daughter and Flush, I don't recall seeing a movie more in the position of sitting around with its jaw hanging while the last train pulled out of the station. Norma Shearer was all right if not Elizabeth Barrett, and Maureen O'Sullivan did a rather fresh interpretation of the younger sister. Otherwise The Old Wampus of Wimpole Street was ready for burial before it started, and then went on forever.

A story that offered no subtleties and all sorts of high adventure was realized in "Treasure Island," which makes a picture so good in some ways that any but the most determined can see what fresh possibilities in the way of beauty and free movement lie in this new art of the screen. The frank swagger of the story was caught from the first, and somewhere near the first there was a fine sequence of the ship getting under weigh, one of the most lovely I have seen. Until this picture, everyone will perhaps have forgotten how shrewdly Stevenson worked in all the rich incidents of a time when, instead of organizing a strike—which is not fine and dashing, but the work of vicious malcontents—people took their damn ship away and struck for booty. The story and the good work of most of those in it was sadly enough spoiled at the end by the extended sentimentality that was allowed to spring up between Wallace Beery and Jackie Cooper; but the first three-quarters of it was still so lively and well established in its mood as to make the whole quite worth going to.

The movie version of Lockhart's "British Agent" brings up a question going a step beyond that of Hollywood's

translation of materials. As the stuff of a great popular art it is inevitable that such material should mirror the ruling-class ideals of its time. But what is often confused is that in making use of it the movies are consciously trying to meet with, rather than mold, popular taste. If there is glamor in battleships or the business of the Rothschilds, then they will splash around in it, doing, like the ladies of the Norfolk waterfront, anything to please. There's no denying the social viciousness of the result; what one gets rather sick of is the criticism that finds the munitions trust or the Chase Bank directly behind all this. Big Money may influence this or that aspect of the trade, but the actual truth is that Big Money is not bright enough to conceive all the wicked designs attributed to it. This is pretty well borne out by Paramount's "British Agent," which taps the glamor of a new and powerful theme, the Russian Revolution. That it stylizes its materials as usual, making the large drama a mere setting for the romance of an Oxford chap (Leslie Howard) and Lenin's secretary (Kay Francis), is beside the point. The encouraging thing about it is that sympathies are not too unequally divided, that the Allies are shown selling their silly idealists down the river, and that for moments at a time the movie public is allowed to glimpse, not dirty unshaven treachery, but ideals of a nature that Mr. Mark (Bombom) Sullivan could only describe as Russian. The picture itself is a spectacle and only fair. Whatever indictment it carries is very soft and there is much nonsense about going down for one's flag and all that. But for anybody with a grain of imagination there is also the suggestion of a great brave shaking of the world underlying the whole, and I am glad to see it.

OTIS FERGUSON.

CORRESPONDENCE

Upton Sinclair's Position

SIR: When Mr. Carey McWilliams called upon me for an interview concerning the Epic Plan, he said that he would submit his copy to me. For some reason he neglected to do this, and so I now have to trouble you to correct a few mistakes.

1. "Advocates of the Townsend Old Age Pension Plan are all supporting Sinclair." The fact is that Dr. Townsend, author of this plan, has issued a statement calling me a "firebrand."

2. "Advocates of the Synchronotax (a nostrum brewed in San Diego), etc." It may be that some of those people are supporting me, but it is hard to see how, since we are calling for the repeal of the sales tax, and they call for nothing but sales tax. We shall certainly advise our people to vote against their measure and I think we shall defeat it.

3. "Basically, however, the Sinclair supporters are mostly the expropriated middle class." The answer is that labor is for us from 70 to 90 percent. The leaders of labor organizations admit this even when they are supporting other candidates themselves. Three of the four railroad brotherhoods have endorsed us. (The conductors—or rather their leaders—are a little too middle class for us.) The reports of our precinct workers are hard to believe. We have heard from two precincts, one in East Oakland, one in Culver City, both working-class neighborhoods, where every registered Democrat is for us. A grocer in Athens, a working-class town in South Los Angeles, took a straw vote of his customers: 230 for Sinclair and 14 divided among a half-dozen other candidates.

4. The things which I am telling the voters are exactly the things which I have believed all my life, and I have not varied them in the slightest degree for political purposes. I have never been an atheist, and in a debate with Haldeman-Julius I wrote

that "an atheist is as dogmatic as the Pope." I have never been a Communist, but have always argued with them and insisted upon democratic procedure in America. My diet is what agrees with me, and I do not urge it upon my friends.

5. As to my refusal to endorse Leo Gallagher for the state Supreme Court: I am pledged to bring about the Epic Plan by constitutional procedure, and Leo Gallagher is pledged to overthrow the Constitution. The idea that I could or should support him is difficult for me to understand. Mr. Gallagher's organ, *The Western Worker*, calls me a Social-Fascist, and my plan "another addled egg from the Blue Buzzard's nest." To expect my support after this is to exhibit the typical Communist lack of humor.

6. My attitude toward the general strike: I have never been "circutious" in my opinion, nor have I indulged in "political equivocation." I would not permit a general strike to happen if I were Governor. The workers understand exactly what I mean. I say: "Give me six months to get the Plan going and take the unemployed off the labor market, and then you won't have to strike."

7. As to what the Democratic Party is likely to do after my nomination, you will soon know. Of the eight other candidates for the Democratic nomination, three have called upon me personally in the past couple of weeks and pledged their support. Two others are likely to do so, from their programs. Only one has stated that he will not support me, but that he will "retire to business." That won't trouble me. A "high official" in the Democratic party told Mr. McWilliams that over 40 percent of the party would desert me in November. Well, my guess is 10 percent, and we will make it up by taking 30 percent of the Republicans.

Finally, Mr. McWilliams closes with a typical Socialist Party opinion: "the certain failure of Sinclair to make good, etc." That is because I am not doing it in the name of Marx. Permit me to quote some words which I wrote for a radio speech on the night before the primaries:

Our opponents have told you that we cannot put this plan through. Let me answer just this: If you should give me a chance to end poverty in California, and if I should fail to do it, life would mean nothing to me thereafter. All that I have taught all through the years would be without meaning. Believe me, I shall not fail! Stick by me and we together shall not fail. We shall give a job to every man and woman in the state who is able and willing to work, and it will be a job with modern machinery and modern technique, whereby these who work produce wealth in great quantities.

Pasadena, Calif.

UPTON SINCLAIR.

Why Wilson Went to War

SIR: I have read with interest Dr. Sidney B. Fay's review of "American Diplomacy During the World War" by Charles Seymour and your editorial comment on it. [*The New Republic*, August 15]. It is a rare sight indeed to have one distinguished historian applaud another for omissions on the one hand and commissions on the other, when the former have to do with the basic psychological and economic factors of the study in hand and the latter have to do with a bland restatement of an ideology that never was and has now more than ever ceased to be useful in this era of world history. Dr. Fay makes it plain that he, in common with Dr. Seymour, holds to an indefensible system of acausal idealism and rejects all efforts to place Woodrow Wilson and the other American war leaders in relation to the economic and social forces of their time. In addition he does not scruple to attribute to those who have engaged in this difficult and delicate kind of study a vulgar materialism of which they are not guilty.

I take it as immensely significant that the Harvard professor applauds the Yale professor and expresses the pious wish that this book may become the official version of our entrance into the War. It shows plainly that we must resign all hope of any conscientious study of this crucial period of our history coming from such "high" sources, since they are committed to sustaining the official mythology. I am not surprised, therefore, to discover Drs. Seymour and Fay ignoring C. Hartley Grattan's "Why We Fought." Pub-

lished in late 1929, this book still remains the one important attempt to establish the true outline of the story. Not only does the general outline given by Mr. Grattan stand firm after five years during which so much documentation has been added to the store available to him when writing his book, but it is a tribute to his insight that the subsequent documentation affords proof of much that he had, perforce, to state speculatively. This applies to large and small matters alike. Nor is this merely my opinion. With admirable persistence Mr. John Chamberlain uses Mr. Grattan's book as a touchstone in his reviews of new works on the period and during the last year has many times made Mr. Grattan's insight and accuracy of interpretation known to readers of *The New York Times*. Surely the academicians should come up to the level of the journalists in these matters if scholarship is to amount to anything at all.

LOUIS M. HACKER.

New York City.

SIR: Along with many of the best economists the reviewer rejects the current tendency—to which Mr. Hacker appears to be a devotee—to overemphasize the economic interpretation of history. So does Dr. Seymour. That is one of the many merits of his book. The reviewer did not mention Mr. Grattan's volume, because he has always regarded it as somewhat superficial, inadequate and unhistorical in its emphasis. If Mr. Chamberlain, for whose judgment the reviewer usually has a high opinion, has used it "as a touchstone," he doubtless did so *faute de mieux*.

Mr. Hacker is quite right in making a distinction between the scholar and the journalist. The scholar reads patiently the original documents and seeks to set forth impartially the truth on the basis of the contemporary evidence and with regard to the psychology of the chief actors concerned. The journalist, in dealing with historical questions, is inclined to read hastily the secondary accounts and seeks to tell an effective story on the basis of the psychology of his readers.

Cambridge, Mass.

SIDNEY B. FAY.

Dalmatia Is Not Italian

SIR: The article "Shelter Belt Realities," by Jonathan Mitchell, in your issue of August 29, was to me profitable reading, with the exception of a statement, towards the end of the article, which reads: "Similarly, as soon as the Dalmatian Coast became Italian territory, the compulsory planting of shelter belts was ordered by Mussolini." Now the truth is that Italy's jurisdiction over the Dalmatian Coast is limited to some twenty-odd square miles, to the city of Zara and its suburbs; the rest, stretching more than four hundred miles on the Adriatic, is Yugoslav territory. A process of systematic reforestation is under way in Dalmatia aiming at a rehabilitation of its semi-arid hills and ridges. The Republic of Venice had most of its swift galleys built with Dalmatian timber, on account of which almost no trace of forest was left in that area. The disappearance of trees left the sharp winds free to blow into the Adriatic all the earth they could haul. The reforestation of Dalmatia is primarily intended to help in regenerating the lost soil. And the work is being done by Yugoslavia, not by Mussolini.

ALEX BOZIC.

Chicago, Ill.

A Progressive School in the Country

SIR: I think that some of your readers would like to know that Manumit still has some vacancies for the coming session that opens September 17. We are a progressive trade-union school on a bona-fide farm in the Berkshires, so that we can offer our pupils real participation in farm and community life, plus horse-back riding, shop work, nature study, painting, dramatics and writing. We take children between the ages of five and twelve; the tuition is \$600 a year.

Roger Baldwin is the director; the chairman of the board and the vice-chairman are Elisabeth A. Irwin and Caroline Pratt.

WILLIAM MANN FINCKE, Director.

Pawling, N. Y.

BOOKS IN REVIEW

A Handbook for Demagogues

WELL, AFTER the hullabaloo about Pareto, his theories are at last being presented in English. Late this fall or early next spring, Harcourt, Brace will publish a complete translation of his "Trattato di Sociologia Generale"; in this country it will be known as "The Mind and Society." It is a work that consists, in the original, of four volumes and more than two thousand pages, with graphs and diagrams strewn about in the text like boulders to block the reader's path (and the text itself is none too easy going). Meanwhile another publisher, Alfred A. Knopf, has brought out a briefer and simpler "Introduction to Pareto,"¹ written by George C. Homans and Charles P. Curtis, Jr., both of whom attended the first seminar on Pareto at Harvard. Lawrence J. Henderson, who conducted the seminar, and Bernard De Voto, who is Pareto's chief American defender and angry-letter writer, have criticized the manuscript and have given it their semi-episcopal *Imprimatur*. The publisher for his part believes that it contains everything the average reader wants to know about Pareto's sociology, and he is right. This book of three hundred pages is long enough to put the cat into the bag and let it out again.

The cat in this particular bag is the notion that Pareto was the founder—"the Copernicus," as Homans and Curtis say—of modern scientific sociology. Pareto himself was responsible for this notion. He asserted that his sole aim in writing "The Mind and Society"—"I say sole aim, and I insist on this point—was to seek out experimental reality, by the application to the social sciences of the methods that have proved their worth in physics, chemistry, astronomy, biology and other similar sciences." But the cat soon gets out. One doesn't read far in the present "Introduction" before discovering that the scientific sociology on which he prided himself was neither scientific nor sociological.

At the very base of his theories, one finds nothing tangible or measurable, but rather a pure abstraction, a two-legged hippogriff entitled the Economic Man. This postulated creature was thought to be animated wholly by self-interest, by the desire and the logical effort to obtain the maximum satisfaction of his wants at the least expense. He would see no reason to be truthful, generous or fair unless these virtues brought him interest at six percent. He would regard virtue itself as a myth. He would not give a sou to a beggar (unless he was watched) or refrain from murdering his uncle to gain an inheritance (unless there was danger of being caught). Although completely imaginary, he was at the same time a typical product of European capitalism. Pareto realized, however, that even a capitalistic society would soon fall to pieces if it was actually composed of men like this. Accordingly, in the effort to bridge the gap between private interest and public interest, between the individual and society, he invented another abstraction—the Sociological Man, in this case wholly illogical, partly unselfish, and ruled by instincts many of which taught him to be obedient and self-sacrificing.

It was obvious to Pareto that no living person corre-

sponded to either of these two imaginary types. On the other hand, he thought that he could use his two abstractions as a means of classifying all human activities. Thus, anything that might be done or said by the Economic Man to advance his private desires could be described as "logico-experimental." Everything else belonged to the Sociological Man and was "non-logico-experimental." Since by definition Pareto had restricted the first type of deeds and words to a narrow field, since he had denied the "logico-experimental" value of generosity or justice or practically anything except penny-pinching, it followed that the second type could be vastly expanded—and Pareto came to believe that history was made and society molded by instinctive actions performed without a logical purpose.

His sociology, therefore, is largely concerned with describing the types of illogical and non-experimental behavior. Here again he proceeds by the method of making arbitrary divisions. The most important of these is the one that leads to his famous theory of Residues and Derivations. He distinguishes between the *real motives* for which men perform their irrational actions (that is, the biological or social patterns they instinctively follow) and the *verbal explanations* that they give when asked, for example, why they take off their hats in church or enlist in the army. The first he calls Residues; the second, Derivations. He believes that the Residues tend to persist from country to country and age to age—thus, a Stoic, a Christian and a devout nineteenth-century atheist might follow an identical moral code even though they explained and rationalized their acts in different fashions. They would have conflicting Derivations, but their Residues would be the same.

In their treatment of Residues and Derivations, both Pareto and his present expounders follow a paradoxical course. At one moment they seem to be making fun of the people who hold these quaint and silly beliefs; at the next, they apologize for scoffing; they say, "Whatever the reader may suspect, we do not wish to disparage a derivation," or again, "If some of them"—they are now discussing Residues—"were not alive in the sentiments of men, society would be in train to dissolve." I think the paradox arises from a conflict in Pareto's mind. Essentially the type of man he admired was the unprincipled freebooter in war, politics or business, yet he realized that somebody had to be generous and loyal if the social hierarchy was to be preserved (and he was horrified by the thought of its being overturned). Accordingly he made another arbitrary division, this time with less justification in fact, and said that nations were composed of two classes, the *elite* and the *masses*. The elite are those who study the Residues and Derivations "for the practical purpose of using them. . . . Like pharmacists they cull and brew these herbs that they may administer them in proper doses to their people—or their dupes." The masses, on the other hand, believe the Derivations and are swayed by their Residues of faithfulness and conservatism, and thereby the social hierarchy is preserved.

In other words, Pareto really agrees with Marx, but from the other side of the gulf. Marx said that religion is the opium of the people. Pareto says that religion (I think one is justified in giving this name to the sum total of the Residues and Derivations) is the opium of the people, and we want to keep them happily submissive, so let's feed them a lot of it. He advises politicians on the art of growing poppies and gathering their juice.

¹ An Introduction to Pareto, His Sociology, by George C. Homans and Charles P. Curtis, Jr. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. 318 pages. \$2.50.

It ought to be obvious even from this brief account that Pareto's theories have nothing whatever to do with scientific sociology. This is a science that deals neither with the Sociological Man nor with any other abstraction. It deals with living people as gathered into actual communities, and it studies them not by arbitrary classification, not by splitting hairs into four imaginary parts, but rather by observation, comparison and computation. Many of its most fruitful methods are statistical. It avoids the error into which Pareto falls, of drawing up elaborate diagrams and graphs and algebraic equations that mean precisely nothing because they deal with quantities that are not only unknown but unknowable. It doesn't talk about instincts. There is a maxim among scientific sociologists that instincts explain nothing: thus, to say that men gather in clubs and social classes because they have an instinct for sociability is equivalent to saying that they are sociable because they are sociable. Pareto's Residues are instincts trying to sneak back under another name after having been deported.

Yet to say that Pareto's doctrines are totally unscientific is not to say that they are lacking in force and danger. There is nothing scientific about a witch doctor's spell—but sometimes the spell is cast and the victim dies. Sometimes the witch doctor may be wise in the ways of his tribe, as Pareto is wise in the ways of politicians and their dupes. There is a good deal of subtlety and astuteness in his analysis. Even in this "Introduction," one can see the principles that Mussolini has borrowed from him and applied, and the principles that Hitler's lieutenants have been using. Science, no—but "The Mind and Society" is a practical handbook and hornbook and pillowbook for demagogues, telling them how to advance, now by lying, now by using force judiciously, now by appealing to the Residues of the masses, till at last they have seized the supreme power. It doesn't, however, tell them how to administer that power once they have seized it. Pareto was a laissez-faire economist who believed that society would administer itself and automatically recover its own equilibrium, and the trouble is that no modern societies seem to be acting in this convenient fashion. He believed that the only duty of the "elite," once they controlled the government, was to enrich themselves and let enough crumbs dribble from their hands to keep the masses quiet. The trouble is today that not enough crumbs are falling; even in Italy the masses are beginning to stir and in Germany they will soon be marching.

MALCOLM COWLEY.

Ill Fares the Land

English Journey, by J. B. Priestley. New York: Harper and Brothers. 336 pages. \$3.

MR. PRIESTLEY, whom we have known chiefly as a breezy English novelist with an almost fatal facility for discovering "characters," quaintness and jollity everywhere, set out in the fall of 1933 to see England. He set out still very much the novelist and, inevitably, discovered a character, a Micawberish little man smoking an abominable patent pipe and "looking for an opening," on the very first lap of his journey. Soon, however, faced with the present-day reality of "England's green and pleasant land," the breezy novelist gave way, to the book's great benefit, to an observant, realistic and increasingly indignant reporter.

Mr. Priestley has prepossessions in favor of handicrafts, hobbies, eccentricity, lovely English landscapes, sturdy countrymen, pubs, theatres and twelfth-century cathedrals.

Here and there he saw some of all these things and he writes of them with humor and charm. More often, however, he saw and kept his eyes resolutely upon drab industrial cities and blackened wasted countrysides, mean streets and reeking slums. He saw the ruins and the human wreckage of the industries that made Victorian England prosperous; the dreary hovels in which unemployed Tyne-side miners and former Lancashire weavers lived and the wretched food on which they subsisted. He saw youths who have grown to manhood on the dole and who know and look forward to nothing else, and older unemployed men who wore the "strained, grayish, faintly decomposed" look he remembered seeing in wartime on the faces of German prisoners after two or three years' captivity. And side by side with these remains of nineteenth-century industrialism he saw and deplored almost equally the symptoms of its cheaper, neater, more efficient twentieth-century successor.

Mr. Priestley's astonishment at these sights appears at times a little naïve—just what, one wonders, did he believe the condition of English post-war workers to be? And he is betrayed occasionally into platitudes as the paradoxes of social injustice strike him, apparently for the first time. But the very freshness of his impressions and the overwhelming impact of reality on his complacency, which one senses here, give the book much of its documentary value. Beyond humane and liberal sentiments he seems to have no remedy to offer for the conditions he describes, but his picture of these conditions is honest and memorable.

MARTHA GRUENING.

An English Charlus

The Quest for Corvo, by A. J. A. Symons. New York: The Macmillan Company. 293 pages. \$2.50.

THE BOOKS of Frederick William Rolfe, self-styled Baron Corvo, have been for many years objects of precious curiosity and fanatical esteem, somewhat like those of such men as Alastair Crowley and, say, Ronald Firbank. These are writers whose personal legends, by their mystery, their effrontery, their incredibility, are more important, or at least more intriguing, than their works. You cannot read them without thinking of their lives, and you cannot think of their lives except in terms of their works. The one is clue to the other, and, except as case histories, to very little else. Thus Mr. Symons rushed from reading "Hadrian the Seventh" into the life of its author and from the life into the other books, both of which were, when he began, equally unknown and inaccessible. Fortune and perseverance over a period of years gave him enough material to satisfy his own curiosity as to the externals of the mystery, and the present fascinating book is a narrative of the quest.

Fascinating the book is, not because its subject is presented as a whole with a character to explain its fate, but because the fragments of personality and incident, vivid in themselves and pressing upon the reader, remain partly undisclosed and have often no satisfying context whatever. There are hints, notes, tokens and signs, and there are gaps, some of them indicated as sufficiently horrible, which the reader cannot help putting dramatically together. For example, what may or may not have been the most illuminating documents of all could not be published on account of their obscenity. These were a series of letters written late in life from Venice to an unnamed correspondent. They described in detail the corruption of young boys with a view to showing what a good pimp Rolfe would make

if only his correspondent and patron would come to Venice. It was finding this correspondence that gave Mr. Symons his initial impulse to take up his quest for Corvo.

For the disinterested reader the great interest of Rolfe is in the skill with which he represented himself as the perfect paranoiac on the one hand and as the incredibly perfect cadge on the other. Clinically, the two talents are seldom seen in combination. So far as the story goes, it was his paranoia that induced him to become a Catholic and convinced him that he had a vocation. The Church judged his vocation false, and he was dismissed from two seminaries in turn. Nevertheless he habitually signed his name as Fr. Rolfe (when he did not go one step further and make himself Frederick Baron Corvo) and believed all his life that he had been defrauded of orders. He wrote his best book, "Hadrian the Seventh" (which is autobiographical and in which under the name of Rose he becomes Pope), to prove his case. Thus he came to hate Catholics, clerical and lay, while he pretended to love the Church and was in fact a good medievalist. At the same time he cadged all his life on one clergyman after another, mostly Catholic, though he also found resource in a lawyer, a doctor, a professor, and one who was merely rich.

At all times he found himself persecuted and betrayed; had mountainous pride and a genius for self-torture and humiliation; hated mankind and dedicated a book "To the Divine Friend Most Desired"; and in general glorified himself in his works and debased himself in life. He slaved for misery with the air of a hero. His letters to his friends combine cruel invective, false accusation and plain begging. He was domineering and self-obliviating. He hid his corruption like his rage (except in his letters) under a firm face and an icy voice. A marvelous monologist, an amateur of words and pretender to knowledge, a lover of the Church and young boys, he painted, wrote and composed. He was an English and incomplete prototype of Proust's great Baron de Charlus.

R. P. BLACKMUR.

Reckless but Feckless

With a Reckless Preface, by John Howard Lawson. New York: Farrar and Rinehart. 251 pages. \$2.50.

From the Life of George Emery Blum, by Virgil Geddes. Brookfield, Conn.: The Brookfield Players. 166 pages. \$2.

THE FAILURE this year within a fortnight of Mr. Lawson's two plays, "The Pure in Heart" and "Gentlewoman," plus Michael Gold's criticism of them in *The New Masses*, plus a strong political revaluation on the part of Mr. Lawson himself, has brought this playwright toward a more forthright social analysis as well as a new audience. In a "reckless preface" he sails into the metropolitan dramatic critics with great vigor and validity. In it he thunders his farewell to them, for he avows the intention of turning his back on the public they influence. From articles in *The New Theatre* and *The Daily Worker* it is clear that Mr. Lawson has turned toward the left with a passionate conviction.

These plays of his also indicate his farewell to the subject matter that has fascinated him for so long, the decay and degradation of the upper and middle classes. Unfortunately he has never treated his subject matter with great clarity. In general his plays have been confused not only politically but also in structure and delineation of character and the two plays in question are no exception. "The Pure in Heart" is a rather trite melodrama of a young, impetuous and de-

termined stage-struck girl, the fuzzy symbol of a pitiful generation of middle-class womanhood. She comes to a violent end because of some indefinable and dramatically unconvincing urge within her. "Gentlewoman," in which he tries hard to denude the upper class and to make a mockery of it, finds Lawson dramatically clearer, perhaps, but no more profound, and equally failing of his purpose.

Virgil Geddes' fondness for lean and disjointed dialogue is a fair symbol of the disjointed purposelessness of his plays. I believe that none of the four in "From the Life of George Emery Blum" has been produced professionally—which would have been worth while if only to convince the author and his more sympathetic critics of their freak qualities. Mr. Geddes' situations are stillborn, his characters tortuous involvements of an intellectual idea. The cycle, "Native Ground," attests to the playwright's fine talents; the superb indirection and liteness of some of the sequences in the Emery Blum plays is further evidence. But the plays as a whole fail to impress. They are emphatically without point, sprawling, tenuous and a waste of unquestionable ability.

MICHAEL BLANKFORT.

The Little Dictator

Rico, Bandit and Dictator, by Antonio de Fierro Blanco. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company. \$2.50.

IF CLASSIFICATION is essential, a book like this can be called a novel, I suppose; otherwise it must be let go as Miscellaneous. The first part of it tells with fresh and fetching drollery the story of Rico, descendant of an Austrian archduke and the daughter of one of the last Aztec Commanders. "I specifically deny," says the author, "intention to indicate historical origin or parallel"; and deny he well may, only his fiction should be kept from certain grave gentlemen in State Departments, as it bristles with back-hand cuffs in the way of truth: "This Corps [diplomatic] is always troublesome to a weak state surrounded by powerful neighbors, all looking wistfully at our mahogany forests and restless because I will not create new wants among my people. . . ."

The story of Rico's rise to dictatorship at the age of twenty endows him with all the strong points of any Latin-American Robin Hood, the weak points of none. He is wise, sly, fond of epigrams and practical jokes. Kindly he is, also: "Leaders should always be executed, but their women I usually distribute among my troops." And politely spoken, even in memoirs: "And then I knew that he would soon be recalled, for a diplomat, unless he represents a great power, must have tact." Yet with a will of his own: "They came half naked and almost carried by soldiers; when I am hurried, those around me also move fast." There is such a delightful blend of simplicity and hard sophistication (Machiavelli, G. B. Shaw and a spot of the Little King) to him, such civilized instincts in the midst of ghosts, blood and junglemasters, that quotation won't catch it. A good long one might help, though:

An election was necessary to legalize my position as dictator, not at home, of course, for here we know elections for what they are. . . . Therefore I sent for Ignacio . . . and said to him, "Don Ignacio, I saved your life in the revolution." This was not quite true, for he had been in Paris when the Battle of the Banners and Santa Ysabel nearly destroyed our Spanish nobility. All I had done was permit him to return when I needed a few old families about me to answer those who accused me of massacring the upper classes.

"Of your lands I saved you a third. Now I ask you a favor."

And he bowed his head, replying: "It is difficult to deny aught to the General."

At which we both laughed, but not wholeheartedly. . . . "I am about to be elected President," I said, "and so particular is the Great Republic to the North that they think an election to be legal must have two candidates. *Ojala*, let us have two. Oblige me by running against me." He straightened himself proudly, but his eyes were startled. . . .

"No!" I reassured him. "It is true that before me it has been the custom to kill one's rival, should there be one, after the election certainly, and, if convenient, before the voting. But now all is altered. I wish to make a gesture which shall appeal to all civilization. . . ."

"And in the canvass I may say what I feel to be the truth?"

"In moderation," I assured him blandly. . . .

Unfortunately the book divides itself almost as though two men had been at the writing of it; the second half is little more than another New Atlantis, built out of platitudes and dull squibs, being in effect the laws and thoughts, as opposed to the deeds and knowing comment, of Rico. It is a mistake and should be deleted, especially as its muddled benevolence, its proposal to maintain a communal society by being severe with rich men, will surely bring forth the cry of fascist, which is surely a terrible cry to bring forth.

The manner of writing, together with the failure to mention (as was done in "Journey of the Flame") a translator, and sundry other trifles, rather lead me to believe this is not all so Spanish as it sounds. But let that and the last part of it go, as it signifies little beside the fact that when the book is good, it is a charming book.

OTIS FERGUSON.

Morris Hillquit

Loose Leaves From a Busy Life, by Morris Hillquit. New York: The Macmillan Company. 332 pages. \$2.50.

IN JULY, 1924, six hundred delegates from labor and progressive organizations met in Cleveland to launch the independent political campaign of Robert M. La Follette for the presidency of the United States. While these rank-and-filers listened to inspirational speeches in the convention hall, the National Committee of the Conference for Progressive Political Action—largely controlled by leaders of the railroad brotherhoods—debated behind closed doors whether to form a permanent independent political party of labor, farmers and progressives, or merely to endorse the candidacy of Senator La Follette in the national election and support the worthiest representatives of existing political parties in regional elections. Morris Hillquit, representing the Socialist Party in these deliberations, fought for the principle of independence.

Meanwhile the convention delegates were getting restive. Hillquit was dispatched as an emissary by the National Committee "to allay their ruffled feelings." His appearance on the platform produced an ovation so tremendous as to leave no doubt that the overwhelming majority of the delegates were behind him in his fight.

"Had I at that moment proposed the immediate organization of a new party," says Mr. Hillquit in his memoirs, "the proposal would have been carried by an overwhelming vote.

"The temptation was great, but one to be resisted. The

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National Committee was still debating the crucial point, and some acceptable compromise seemed possible. It would manifestly have been an act of disloyalty for me to attempt to force a decision from the floor of the convention before the committee had reached a conclusion, especially when I was acting as emissary of the committee."

This incident symbolizes, I think, the characteristics of Morris Hillquit that caused him to be respected and trusted, on the one hand, by many of the more conservative elements in the American labor movement as well as his bourgeois opponents in political campaigns, and to be maligned and viewed with suspicion, on the other hand, by the leaders of the left wing in the radical movement.

Hillquit was a lawyer. His mind functioned in logical, legalistic channels. He believed in fighting the capitalist system by legal means. In working to instill a socialist philosophy in the minds of the American working class he pursued the course of attempting to win the confidence of its leaders, trusting that eventually the principles in which he believed would be accepted on their merits.

He believed in giving the devil his due. Frequently in his memoirs we note references to the fair-mindedness of judges and political opponents. His approach was realistic to the point of exasperating his comrades on the left. When they were visioning an early revolution after the War he was persistently maintaining that the time was not ripe, the American workers were not class-conscious, the United States had emerged victorious and an immediate collapse in the system here was unimaginable.

The present work is not an autobiography of Mr. Hillquit. It is rather, as its title indicates, loose leaves plucked somewhat at random from his life story. The only period that is covered with any degree of completeness is the World War era. Here reminiscences of his anti-war mayoralty campaign in New York, his defense of Socialists indicted under the espionage law, and the "lynching of the Constitution" by the New York assembly in expelling the Socialist assemblymen in 1920, may be perused with interest by all readers, irrespective of what their political creeds may be.

Mr. Hillquit does not attack his Communist enemies in this book. Nor does he have anything to say in justification for his unfortunate turn of bitterness toward Soviet Russia in the closing years of his life. He is concerned chiefly with those phases in his busy career that can be recalled with most pleasure.

ROLAND GIBSON.

Books in Brief

The Chance of a Lifetime: Marching Orders for the Lost Generation, by *Walter B. Pitkin*. New York: Simon and Schuster. 292 pages. \$2.

MR. PITKIN'S book of the month is written, he says, with no personal interest "except the obvious one of wishing to speed the rear guard of the barbarian army on its way to oblivion." "This book," he goes on, in another section of the jacket, "peddles no Utopia. It champions nothing more than ingenuity, persistence, hard work and the high resolve to trample underfoot the wretched philosophy of scarcity that has been gaining vogue of late." So that is what the book looks like from the cover. I should like to go farther than this, but regret to announce that Mr. Pitkin is now writing faster than I can read. I wish hereby to throw in the towel on Mr. Pitkin.

O. F.

Belmonte the Matador, by Henry Baerlein. New York: Harrison Smith and Robert Haas. 387 pages, illustrated. \$3.50.

This book is ostensibly about Juan Belmonte, one of the three ranking heroes of Spain: actually it is about Henry Baerlein's ability to feel Spanish, in words. Nothing but "Carmen" or "Valencia," "Valencia" or Eddie Cantor, could possibly be more Spanish. Almost in spite of Baerlein's effusions of atmosphere do we get snatches of Belmonte personal enough to tell us what he really was like. The author says again and again that Belmonte revolutionized bull-fighting, but he does not say how. What Belmonte the ugly, the tragic and the mysterious, did to bull-fighting was this; he moved less, and more slowly, than any of those who had come before him, while saving the best of their graces. He never pulled his punches. He was the most dramatic of all, because he never pretended to be dramatic. It is regrettable that Baerlein, instead of writing the gossipy travelogue padded with anecdotes of Montenegro and Prague he has turned out, did not translate one of the native biographies of Belmonte to which he so often refers. Hemingway, at whom he cannot resist taking cracks, said much more about Belmonte in a few pages.

J. N.

Social Problems, by Henry George. New York: Robert Schalkenbach Foundation. 256 pages. \$1.

A civilization which tends to concentrate wealth and power in the hands of a fortunate few, and to make of others mere human machines, must inevitably evolve anarchy and bring destruction. . . . Though there is poverty and want, there is, yet, seeming embarrassment from the very excess of wealth-producing forces. . . . It is startling to think how destructive in a civilization like ours would be such fierce conflicts as fill the history of the past.

These sentences were not written by Stuart Chase in 1933, but by Henry George in 1883. One of the penalties that befall a man who has propagated a great idea is that he comes to be thought of as a one-idea man, and very few of those who know his work at all are aware of the breadth of vision and catholicity of knowledge that may lie behind it. So it is with Henry George. Because to him the center of economic injustice and social exploitation seemed to lie in the private ownership of land, and the remedy for them in the "single tax," his penetrating and excursive thought in the wider reaches of social interest has been very little recognized. This new book will serve not only to correct that deficiency but, even more importantly, to show how much of sound prophecy may be made by a man of sufficient ability to read well in the world of his time.

H. P. F.

It's a Battlefield, by Graham Greene. New York: Doubleday, Doran and Company. \$2.

With a technique reminiscent of his "Orient Express," Graham Greene takes up the case of Jim Drover. Drover, happy in his marriage and quite contented with his job, although a Communist, stabs a policeman at a meeting in Hyde Park, thinking the policeman is about to strike his wife. He is condemned to be hanged. The story that follows is a round of betrayals—by his brother and his wife, both loving him devotedly, but fearful of life passing them by; by his young overworked sister-in-law, forgetful of Jim's predicament in her pursuit of sex; by the Communist Party members, quarreling for leadership—and, finally,

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ironically enough, by the successful efforts of persons hoping to advance their own political fortunes through the case, who manage to have him reprieved—Jim and his wife will have passed their zenith when the eighteen years of prison are over. It is a disheartening story—the deserters of Jim betrayed in advance by their own limitations and by society—so disheartening that, absorbing as the book is in its grim literary economy, it does not wholly convince. One wishes that Mr. Greene had chosen his characters as carefully as his phrases.

B. E. B.

Le Problème Mondial du Blé, by Paul de Hevesy. Paris: Librairie Félix Alcan. 293 pages. 30 francs.

This timely book on the world wheat problem is written in excellent French by a Hungarian diplomat with a first-hand knowledge of the countries he discusses. He presents his arguments with force and clarity, if with some prolixity. The essence of his plan is to raise the price of wheat on the world market without increasing production. Having observed that while the wheat harvests of individual countries are extremely variable, the world wheat production is eminently stable, he plans to eliminate the wheat stocks that now encumber the world market and to regulate wheat production so that no country will produce in future more wheat than is necessary for its own consumption, plus a small exportable surplus. This would be regulated by a National Wheat Office in each country, which would have a monopoly of the purchase and sale of all wheat. Export and import would be regulated by an International Wheat Office, which would distribute any surplus to countries with

a deficit. The world price of wheat would be fixed by an International Wheat Council. The author believes that some such scheme, insuring the maximum of liberty with the minimum of organization, is not only inevitable but imminent.

A. M. H.

Contributors

H. N. BRAILSFORD is the London correspondent of The New Republic and the author, among other books, of "Property or Peace," recently published by Covici-Friede.

MARIAN MURRAY is a member of the staff of The Hartford Times.

HELEN WOLFERT teaches in a New York City school. She spent several months in Germany in 1932.

MARTHA GRUENING, former field research secretary for the Association for the Advancement of Colored People, contributes reviews and articles to numerous magazines.

R. P. BLACKMUR, a former editor of The Hound and Horn and a frequent contributor to that and other reviews, is a poet and critic.

MICHAEL BLANKFORT is a member of the board of directors of the Theatre Union and recently directed its successful production "Stevedore." He is now collecting an anthology of American plays and in collaboration with Michael Gold is writing a play titled "John Brown."

ROLAND GIBSON is a New York journalist and a writer on labor questions.

The initials signed to the brief reviews are those of James Neugass, Henry Pratt Fairchild, Beatrice E. Bettinger and Mrs. A. M. Hanney.

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